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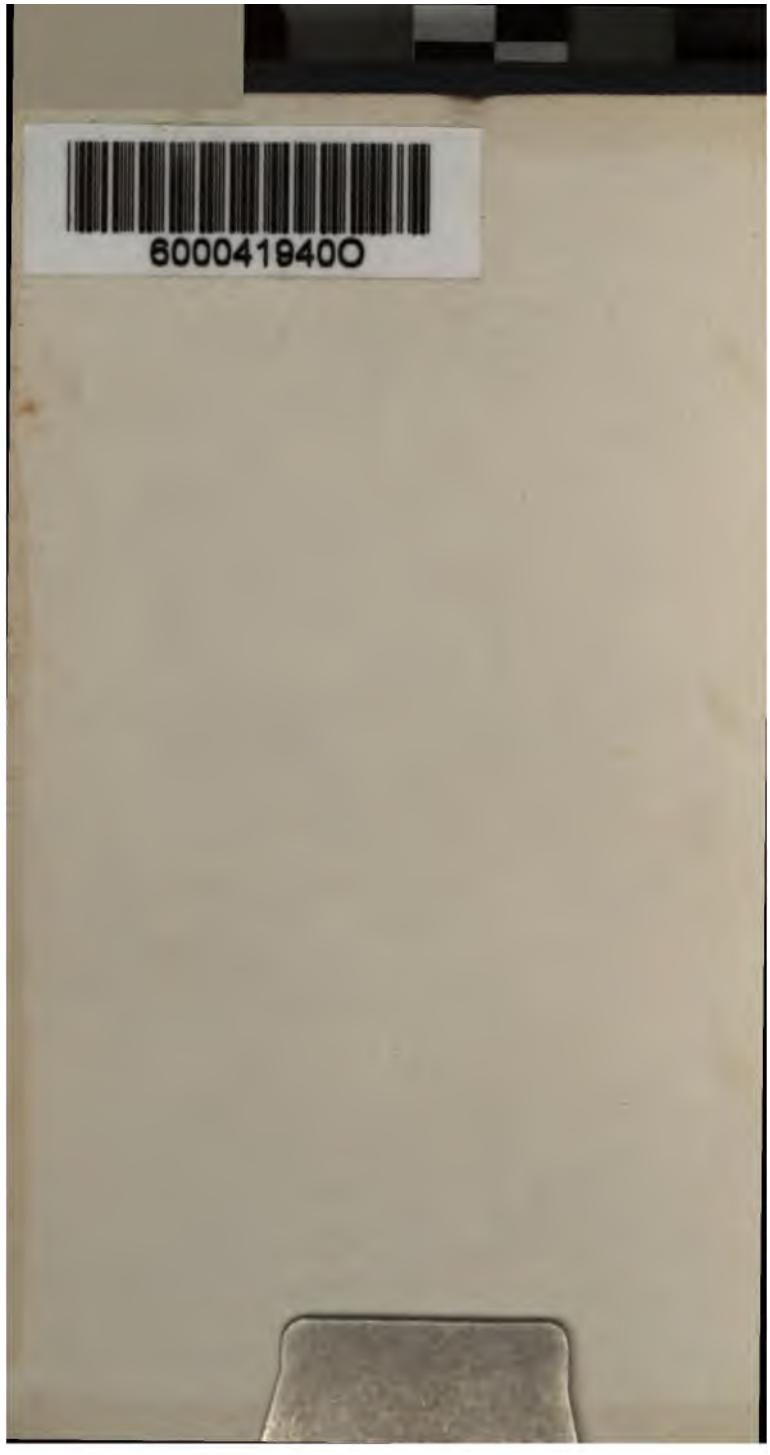
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A VIEW

OF THE RISE AND FALL

Of the Kingdoms

OF

JUDAH AND ISRAEL;

INTENDED FOR THE USE OF YOUNG PERSONS,

(AFTER THE MANNER OF GOLDSMITH).

BY WILLIAM STEVENS,
Editor of
THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN BRADFORD,
THE REFORMER AND MARTYR.

" *They* and *they* only, amongst all mankind,
" Receiv'd the transcript of th'Eternal mind:
" Were trusted with His own engraven laws,
" And constituted guardians of His cause:
" *Their's* were the prophets—*their's* the priestly call.
" And *their's* by birth, the SAVIOUR OF US ALL."

COWPER,—*Expostulation.*

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1833.

33.134.







PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

It could hardly be necessary at any time to offer an apology for an attempt, however humble, to illustrate the history of God's peculiar people; and still less for making such an attempt at a period, when the attention of all reflecting Christians, is so anxiously riveted upon the movements of that interesting race.

The author is well aware, however, that there are individuals, and those not a few, who either hold or affect to hold in contempt, the allusions that are so frequently made by others to the descendants of Abraham; but until such individuals can succeed in proving, that the maker of the universe did not invest this nation with peculiar privileges, and that for a great and especial purpose, all such efforts will recoil upon themselves.

In truth, it is totally impossible for any sincere professor of the Christian faith, to be indifferent to whatever relates to the

Jews; with whom, and whose history, past, present, and to come, our best interests are bound up, and our highest destinies inevitably involved.

That a few individuals, of a temperament somewhat over sanguine, should occasionally indulge in what may appear visionary anticipations respecting the descendants of Abraham, is not surprising; and so far from subjecting them to ridicule, we ought to respect and admire their piety, and their anxiety to trace and investigate the probable future purposes of Jehovah, with respect to his beloved, though at present rejected people, even if we cannot in all respects adopt their opinions. Venial indeed are such errors! and how infinitely do such characters rise above those who are exhausting their time, talents, and strength, in seeking after honours, riches, and all the vanity of this world, which perish in the using; such indeed are deservedly objects of contempt, and such we shall one day see "troubled with

ness and destruction; yea, we have gone through deserts, where there lay no way; but as for the way of Jehovah, we have not known it. What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow, and as a post that hasted by; and as a ship that passeth over the waves of the water, which when it is gone by, the trace thereof cannot be found, neither the pathway of the keel in the waves; or as when a bird hath flown through the air, there is no token of her way to be found, but the light air being beaten with the stroke of her wings, and parted with the violent noise and motion of them, is passed through, and therein afterwards no sign where she went is to be found; or like as when an arrow is shot at a mark it parteth the air, which immediately cometh together again, so that a man cannot know where it went through. Even so we in like manner, as soon as we were born, began to draw to our end, and had no sign of virtue to shew, but were consumed in our own wickedness. For the hope of the ungodly is like dust that is blown away with the wind; like a thin frost that is driven away with the storm; like as the smoke which is dispersed here and there with a tempest, and passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day. But the righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the Most High."*

It may be safely asserted that there is no surer test of the

* Wisd. v. 1—15.

prevailing tone of Christianity, *etiam stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*, than the degree of interest which is felt towards the houses of Judah and Israel—for it might be easily shewn that exactly in the proportion which they occupy the minds, prayers, and affections of professing Christians—in that same proportion, will the zeal and activity of the personal religion of such Christians, be found in operation.

Whenever there has been any remarkable revival of religion in any country, one of the first fruits has invariably been an anxious and lively interest in the welfare and future prosperity of the Jewish people; and on the other hand, whenever a church has fallen into a lukewarm and Laodicean state, the Jews have become neglected and despised, the subjects of opprobrium; yes, and so low have some churches fallen, that strange and incredible as it may appear, Christian bishops and priests have been known to disgrace them-

ning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of Jehovah of Hosts, the mount Zion."*

At the present period, we may repeat, at all events, no apology can be necessary for any attempt to illustrate their history. Without venturing into the regions of prophecy, it seems difficult for any man, with his Bible in his hand, to behold the passing events of the world, without anticipating that some extraordinary manifestation of God's purposes is rapidly approaching. We may perhaps be told that during the political life of Napoleon, the prophets were at work, and that they foretold wonderful events which never came to pass, and excited expectations which have never been realized. Be it so, What wonder? If the Jews themselves, with the Old Testament in their hands, could not comprehend their own prophecies *when actually fulfilled*, how much more difficult must it be for those who live now, to predict with precision, the events which are not yet accomplished. Did the scoffing and the jesting of the antediluvians, during the one hundred and twenty years in which Noah was building the ark, divert the purpose of God in overwhelming the world with the deluge? Did the refusal of the Jews to listen to John the Baptist disappoint the first advent of the Messiah? Or did their rejection of the mission of Jesus prevent its fulfilment; or their disregard of his warnings the destruction of their city and nation? Saint Peter was well aware that a time

* Is. xviii. 2, 3. 7. Upon which chapter see a most admirable letter by Bp. Horsley, London, 1810.

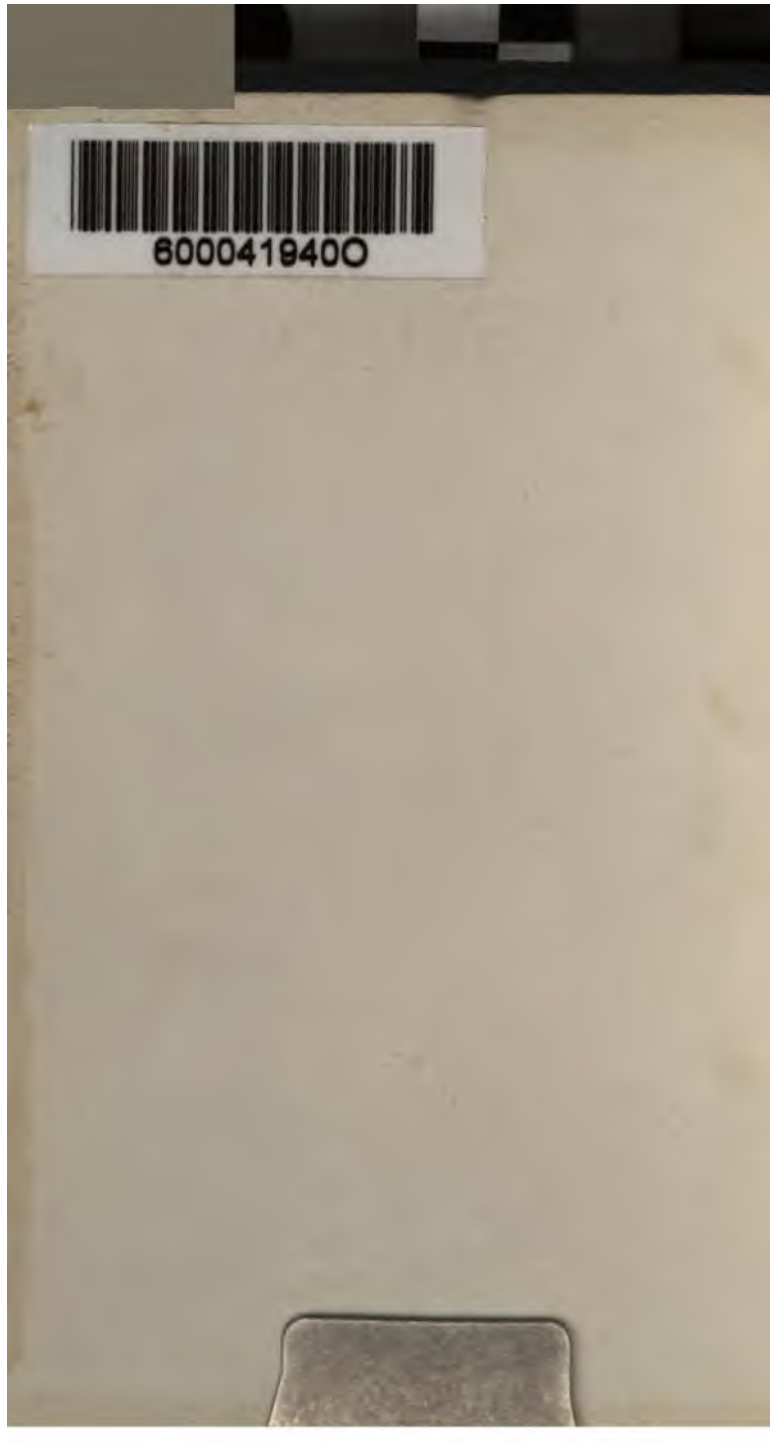

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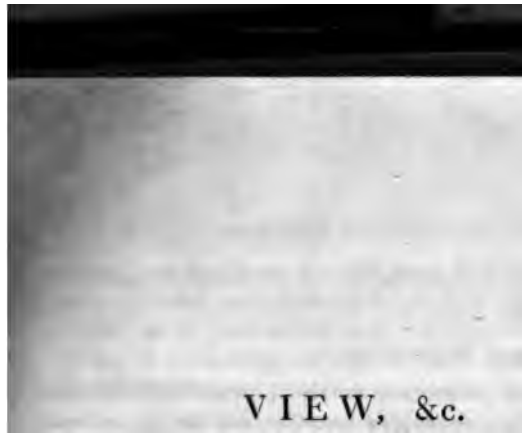
rapidly approaching. So strong is this feeling upon some vigorous and intelligent, not puny and enthusiastic, intellects, that when they take their pen in hand to promulgate their opinions, they proceed currentissimo calamo, lest the events they anticipate should occur before their embryo publication arrive at maturity.

It is not, however, the object of the following compilation, for the writer aims at no higher title, to enter into the discussion of such questions; but it has appeared to him, that a work shewing a clear and succinct consecutive account, of the rise and fall of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, illustrated by such notices as may be found of them in the profane writers and in ancient and modern travellers, was still a desideratum, and might be serviceable to fix a steady belief in divine revelation in the minds of young people; and excite a general interest as to the future prospects of a race, who not only stand in such a relation to the great author of the universe, as no other nation under heaven can lay claim

that every descendant of Abraham in his day is not, nolens volens, a standing witness for Jehovah? "I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease; for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction."* And what a reproach is it not to Christian princes and Christian bishops, as they call themselves, when even an avowed infidel like Frederick, either from motives of policy, or the restraining providence of God, was induced to bear an unwilling testimony to the truth of divine revelation, which they themselves hesitate not to disregard and despise.

* Zech. i. 15.


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VIEW, &c.

FROM the time that God called Abraham out of Ur,* of the Chaldees, and said to him, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed;"† it may be considered that the eye and providence of Jehovah were more especially set upon this holy patriarch and his future progeny. The communications with which he and his immediate descendants, Isaac and Jacob, were favoured from time to time by the Angel of the Covenant, establish the existence of this relation to the death of Joseph, when an interval takes place in the Sacred History of probably 120 years, during which, the Holy Spirit does not inform us what were the dealings of God with the Children of Israel.

From the birth of Moses, however, we have a detailed and minute account of the extraordinary proceedings of Jehovah towards the descendants of Abraham, in Egypt, at the Red Sea, in the Wilderness, at Jordan, and in their progress and settlement in the land of Canaan, according to his promise to Abraham, 430 years before, "Unto thy seed will I give

* The Edessa of the Greeks, and now called ORFAH.—Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. i. 88.

† Gen. xii. 2, 3. Burder, O. L. 34.

this land,"* for 800 years, down to the age of the prophet Samuel; during which period Jehovah himself condescended to rule and direct even the minutest concerns, in the government and religion of this highly favoured race; to appoint over them rulers, judges, and prophets, constituting them, as it were, his own viceroys; to hear their complaints; to redress their grievances; to protect them from their enemies; and to prepare them for future glory, grandeur, and happiness. Of such a people, well might the Psalmist exclaim—"Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord."†

It might have been imagined that the mere selection of an individual nation, and the transaction of such extraordinary events with one peculiar people, and they the fewest of all people,‡ would of itself form a sufficient and invincible argument to all unbelievers; for well indeed might the Divine Saviour say, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."§

The two fatal battles of Aphek,‖ in the last of which the Israelites lost the Ark of God and 30,000 men, had subjected them to the oppression of the Philistines, who appear to have ruled them with a rod of iron:¶ but God so displayed his power in overthrowing their idols,** that those enemies were soon glad to send back the palladium of Israel's security; and, after twenty years, "Samuel called to Israel to return to the Lord, and put away the strange gods and Ashtoreth†† from among them. Having yielded to this

* Gen. xii. 7. xv. 16.

† Ps. cxliv. 15. ‡ Deut. vii. 7. § Luke, xvi. 31. ‖ 1 Sam. iv.

¶ 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 20. Burder, O. C. 293. ** 1 Sam. v.

†† A goddess of the Zidonians, 1 Kings, xi. 33. She was the same as Astarte or Astronoe, called by the Phœnicians, the mother of the gods—compounded from As-Tora, the Heifer of the Sun; or

appeal, the prophet assembled them at Mizpeh, evidently with a view to throw off the yoke of Philistia; but the lords of that nation having collected a great army, the Israelites became fearful, and besought Samuel not to cease to cry unto the Lord for them.

The prophet accordingly offered up a sucking lamb, and cried unto the Lord for Israel, and he heard him; for the Philistines having drawn near to attack the Israelites whilst Samuel was performing the sacrifice, the Lord thundered at the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel; whereupon Samuel set up a stone between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

"So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to them, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coast thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites."*

Insensible, however, to the high advantages and inestimable privileges with which they had so long been favoured, the Israelites grew tired of that very distinction from other nations, which they ought to have esteemed their highest honour; and even all the elders of Israel called upon Samuel, as Moses had prophesied,† to make them a king, to

As-Tora-Noe, the Heifer of Noah of the Sun. This etymology will perfectly accord with the Narrative of Sanchoniatho, who teaches us, that Astarte was represented with the horns of a bull. The Phœnician mother of the gods was merely the No-etic Ark, represented in the person of Astarte, under its usual emblem, the Heifer; while her lover, Esculapius, was the Solar Noah.—Faber. Myst. Cabir. Vol. I. 103.

* 1 Sam. vii. 13, 14. † Deut. xvii. 14.

judge them, like all the nations.* That this request raised the just indignation of their Almighty Protector, is evident from the declaration which he made to the prophet; "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them."—"This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you; he will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-

that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, hearken unto their voice, and make them a king."*

And it is hardly possible to read this part of their history, without figuring to one's imagination the heartfelt agony of the holy Samuel; whose prophetic spirit no doubt enabled him to pierce the mists of succeeding ages, and to anticipate all the horrors and miseries his beloved nation were dragging down upon their own heads, and those of their posterity; and when in their impious fury and madness they cried out, "God save the king,"† we may readily believe his heart was going up to God in some such prayer as that of the Saviour, upon another even more awful occasion, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."‡

So heinous, indeed, as we may well suppose, was the crime which they had committed, and so melancholy were its necessary consequences, that more than three centuries afterwards, the Lord himself, with whom a thousand years are as one day, made the following pathetic lamentation over them; "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help. I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges, of whom thou saidst, give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath."§

In consequence, however, of this most ungrateful petition, Saul was anointed king over them, shortly before the death of the prophet Samuel;‖ and we are informed, that, upon that occasion, Samuel told the people the manner of the

* 1 Sam. viii. 19. 22. † 1 Sam. x. 24. Burder, O. C. 291.
‡ Luke, xxiii. 34. § Hosea, xiii. 9, 10, 11. ‖ 1 Sam. x. 1.

kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord.* What this book contained, we know not, as no other mention is made of it in the sacred writings.

Saul began his reign over Israel about 1095† years before the birth of Christ. He was the son of Kish, of the family of Matri, and of the tribe of Benjamin; and previous to his elevation to the government of Israel, was evidently engaged, like the earlier patriarchs, in agricultural pursuits.

On the first communication of the mind of God to Saul, he discovered a disposition of humility, from which better results might have been anticipated. "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou so to me?"‡

After the anointing of Saul, by the prophet Samuel, we are informed, that God gave him another heart; and meeting with a company of prophets, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.§ And whatever was the exact moral change which then took place, it was, at all events, so great as induced the people to cry out, "Is

which so frequently characterises those who are suddenly elevated to exalted stations; for when some men of Belial* said, how shall this man save us? and despised him, and brought him no presents;† he discovered no resentment, but merely held his peace: and we shall find, from his subsequent conduct towards them upon another occasion, this was the result of real magnanimity, and not merely the effect of smothered resentment.

The sacred record says, that when the new monarch stood among the people, he was higher than any of them, from his shoulders and upward; and Samuel said to all the people, "See ye him whom Jehovah hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people."‡

In the whole of this proceeding, we cannot fail to admire the tender yearnings of God over this favoured race, and his evident unwillingness to give them up to their own hearts' lusts. It was true they had rejected his immediate authority, and demanded a king, that they might be like the other nations. He complied with their request, and gave them their hearts' desire; but well aware of the misery they were bringing upon themselves, and justly indignant with them for their ingratitude, he interposed an expedient by which they might have been saved; for although he gave them a king, he reserved to the exercise of his own divine omnisience and prescience, the prerogative of appointing who that king should be. "To-morrow, about this time, I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines; for I have

* 1 Sam. x. 27. We are not informed who or what they were, but probably the term is used, merely as designating their wickedness in general.

† As was the usual custom in the East. Harmer, ii. 302.

‡ 1 Sam. x. 23, 24.

looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me. And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people." *

A. C. 1095. We may also remark, that God has respect to the perfection of human beauty in those whom he selects to administer before him; thus Saul was exceedingly distinguished for his manly proportions, and David afterwards for his personal beauty.†

One of the first transactions in which the new monarch distinguished himself, was in a battle with Nahash, a king or chief of the Ammonites, one of the nations bordering on the land of Canaan, who were not as yet entirely extirpated. Nahash had encamped with his army before Jabesh Gilead, and threatened to besiege it, when the inhabitants, in order to appease him, offered to serve him, or submit to become his tributaries, if he would make a covenant with them, or enter into such a treaty of alliance, as would secure them from future injury. The proud Ammonite acceded to their request, but upon the insolent and cruel condition, that he might thrust out all their right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel.‡

Conquerors and warriors often overshoot their mark, and by aiming to impose too severe conditions upon the vanquished, or those whom they consider unable to contend with them, excite a spirit of despair and revenge, which proves fatal to themselves. So it happened with the enemies of Jabesh Gilead. Exasperated at the insolence of the Ammonite, and yet unable to resist him without assistance, they solicited, and apparently obtained, a respite of seven days, at the end of which time, if they received no assistance from their brethren, they agreed to go out to Nahash, as it would seem,

* 1 Sam. ix. 16, 17. † Burder, O. L. 763.
‡ 1 Sam. xi. 2. Burder, O. L. 436.

in order to submit themselves to the infliction of his cruel and abandoned purpose.

They accordingly sent their messengers to Saul, who was then in Gibeah, and their melancholy tale excited the sympathy of the people, so that they wept, and no less indignation in the mind of Saul; for, influenced by the Spirit of God, he immediately took a yoke or pair of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel, by the hands of messengers, saying, whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. By this means, and under the fear of the Lord, Saul assembled an army of 300,000 men of the children of Israel, and 30,000 of the men of Judah, and sent the messengers back to their terrified and anxious brethren of Jabesh Gilead, with this significant and encouraging message. "To-morrow by that time the sun be hot, ye shall have help."*

We may easily imagine how grateful this message must have been to the inhabitants of the besieged city,† who immediately sent word to Nahash; "to-morrow we will come out to you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you."

Upon his arrival, Saul divided his army into three bands, or companies; and they came into the midst of the host (of the enemy), in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites

* 1 Sam. xi. 9.

† We have some affecting examples of similar relief in history. Such must have been the joy experienced by the inhabitants of Vienna, when besieged by two hundred thousand Turks, under the famous Kara Mustapha, in the year 1683, they were relieved at the last moment, by the arrival of the famous John Sobieski, King of Poland: and such the exultation with which Jane, Countess of Montford, when, from the highest turret of the Castle of Hennebon, in Flanders, and whilst her ministers were actually framing the terms of capitulation to her husband's rival, exclaimed on descrying the pennons of the brave Sir Walter Manny floating in the offing, The English! The English! I see the English.

until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.*

Saul here again shewed his magnanimity and disposition for mercy, for when, in the exultation of victory, some of his adherents were desirous of punishing the men of Belial for their insolence and disloyalty, exclaiming, who is he that asked, shall Saul reign over us? bring the men that we may put them to death; he replied, there shall not a man be put to death this day, for to day the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.†

It would seem that it was not the purpose of Jehovah, that the king whom he appointed over this people should be established in great pomp, for although Saul had been already anointed, and subsequently publicly chosen by lot, and the manner of the kingdom had been written in a book, yet when the messengers from Jabesh Gilead came to him, they found him "coming after the herd out of the field;" so that he must have continued to follow his pastoral and patriarchal occupations, after his elevation to the regal dignity.

Still, however, God was unwilling to pass by the great crime of which the Jewish nation had been guilty, in rejecting his own immediate government, for towards the close of Samuel's life, that distinguished prophet, in a solemn address, after pointing out how they had been led, conducted, and preserved, by Jehovah himself, but yet promising protection both to them and their king, if they would fear the Lord and serve him, and obey his voice,‡ adds, "now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat-harvest to day? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain: that

* 1 Sam. xi. 11. † 1 Sam. xi. 13. ‡ 1 Sam. xii. 14.

ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord: and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins, this evil, to ask us a king."*

But mark the forbearing mercy of God, for the prophet immediately adds, "the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake:" but why, "because it has pleased the Lord to make you his people." And then he pathetically concludes, "only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you: but if ye shall still do wickedly ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king."†

In the third year of the reign of Saul, the people began to feel something of the kingly burthen which they had brought upon themselves; for we are told that Saul had selected three thousand soldiers, two thousand of whom he reserved as a body guard for himself in Michmash and Mount Bethel; and the other thousand he gave to his eldest son Jonathan, who dwelt in Gibeah of Benjamin.‡

The next transaction in the reign of Saul was a war with the Philistines, originating in an attack by Jonathan upon one of their garrisons in Geba. We are not informed what induced Jonathan to take this step, nor whether he was authorized by Saul, who however anticipated it would involve the nation in a general war; and therefore he blew the trumpet throughout the land, and said, "let the Hebrews hear;"§ who, in consequence, assembled themselves to Saul in Gilgal. The Philistines encamped in Michmash, eastward

* 1 Sam. xii. 19. Harmer, i. 91.

† 1 Sam. xii. 25. ‡ 1 Sam. xiii. 2. § 1 Sam. xiii. 4.

from Beth-Aven, an immense army, described as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude, with thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen.

Alarmed at the formidable appearance of the enemy, most of the Israelites withdrew from Saul; and he with difficulty induced a small number to remain with him in Gilgal, where he was waiting for Samuel, according to the directions of that prophet when he anointed him.*

The prescribed seven days having expired, and six hundred men only remaining, and those without any sword or spear,† either through want of faith, or excess of impatience, Saul ventured to offer up a burnt offering; and which sacrifice he had hardly completed, when Samuel arrived. Upon Saul's offering in excuse the prophet's delay, the paucity of his own troops, and the imposing appearance of the Philistines, Samuel exclaimed, "thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee; for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy

although the Lord had, as it were, given up Saul, yet that he inspired Jonathan to perform it, in order to shew that he had not wholly withdrawn his presence from his own people.

Whilst Saul and the remnant of his army were thus lying at Gibeah, and expecting no doubt every moment to be attacked and exterminated by the Philistines, Jonathan secretly withdrew from the camp, taking with him only a young man, his armour bearer, in order to attempt a surprise upon the enemies' garrison at Michmash. In the passage between Michmash and Gibeah, there were two rocks with their backs to each other, or one rock with a double face; one of which was named Bozez, and the other Seneh.

It would seem that sentinels were placed on the top of this rock; and Jonathan, guided no doubt by a divine impulse, had settled with his armour bearer, that if, on approaching the sentinels, they should say, "come up to us," they would do so; but if the sentinels should say, "tarry until we come to you," then they should stand still. Upon seeing Jonathan and his armour bearer, the Philistines said, "Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves;" and cried out, "come up to us, and we will shew you a thing." Jonathan evidently felt he was acting under the guidance of God; for having exclaimed to his armour bearer, "come up after me, for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel:" he immediately climbed up on his hands and feet, followed by his armour bearer, when they slew twenty men. The alarm produced by this sudden attack, and the miraculous effect of the terror put into their hearts by the Lord, was so great, that the whole garrison fled before them; and could be distinguished by the sentinels of Saul in Gibeah, as beating down one another till the whole multitude melted away.

Saul was so entirely ignorant of what had happened, and so unable to account for the dispersion of the Philistines,

which his scouts reported to him, that he caused a general muster of his own army immediately, to see whether any of the Israelites were concerned in this signal overthrow; when he discovered, for the first time, that his eldest son Jonathan and his armour bearer were missing.

Saul immediately called for the Ark of the Lord; and while he talked with Ahiah the priest, the noise in the camp of the Philistines increased so much, that Saul with his small band of forces ventured to draw near, and reconnoitre them; and perceived that throughout the enemies' host, every man's hand was against his fellow, and that there was a very great discomfiture; not a little increased by the Hebrew slaves in their camp, who took advantage of the consternation to rise against their masters and oppressors, and unite with Jonathan and his armour bearer, who by this time had been joined by his father and the Israelites, as well as those who had hid themselves in Mount Ephraim. So the Lord saved Israel in that day, and the battle passed over unto Beth-Aven.

Such an exploit as this, if related by a heathen writer, or a modern historian, would have become the theme of general eulogy and warm admiration. And, in point of fact, a very similar occurrence, by an English sailor, at the taking of Fort Omoa, in the Bay of Honduras, in the year 1779, has actually produced such an effect. But this exploit of Jonathan, the son of Saul, is related in the Bible; and therefore, like many other most interesting and important transactions, is but little heeded, perhaps hardly known by thousands, who would be ashamed to appear ignorant of the minutest occurrences in English or even general history.

The blessing of God was withdrawn from Saul, so that this victory was not so complete as it most likely would have been, if he had remained in Gibeah. Probably without any bad intent, but very injudiciously, he had issued a proclamation; "cursed be the man that eateth any food until the evening,

that I may be avenged on mine enemies." This was strictly observed by all except Jonathan, who, not having heard the injunction, eat a little honey which he found in the wood; and when some of the fainting people informed him of his father's orders, he hesitated not to say, "my father hath troubled the land." "If haply the people had eaten freely to day of the spoil of their enemies, there would have been a much greater slaughter amongst the Philistines."

But the evil did not end here, for the Israelites having pursued the enemy from Michmash to Ajalon, and become inordinately faint and hungry; when the evening at length came, they flew upon the spoil, and slew the sheep, oxen, and calves on the ground, and eat them in their blood, without taking time to perform those rites and observances which the ceremonial law, given by God to Moses, had so strictly enjoined.

This was actual sin against God, and Saul was so sensible of it, and apprehensive of the consequences, that he caused a great stone to be rolled towards him, and every man to bring his ox and sheep, and slay them there, and not to sin against the Lord in eating with blood.

Saul was desirous to pursue after the Philistines, but Ahiah the priest restrained him, and said, "let us draw near hither unto God:" upon which Saul asked counsel of God, "shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But God answered him not that day."

Upon this Saul began to suspect that some secret sin had been committed amongst the people, like many others not choosing to imagine that the displeasure of his God was chiefly directed towards himself; and rashly swearing, that if it lay even with his son Jonathan he should surely die; proceeded to cast lots, and called upon the Lord to sanction the proceeding.

The lot having fallen upon Jonathan, he confessed, "I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand, and lo, I must die." It does not appear that Saul relented from his purpose, for he immediately answered, "God do so, and more also: for thou shalt surely die." The people, however, cried out, "shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground: for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not."*

This affair put an end to the punishment of the Philistines, who returned to their own territories; and Saul was established in the throne of Israel, and made repeated attacks upon the neighbouring nations of Moab, Ammon, Edom, Zobah, and the Philistines, so that whithersoever he turned himself he vexed them: and gathering an host, he smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

The next trial of the faith and obedience of Saul, was in an expedition against the Amalekites. Samuel said unto Saul, the Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of Jehovah. This preface, we may suppose, was by way of warning and admonition to Saul, that his precise and especial obedience was required to the message which the prophet was about to deliver. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way,† when he came

* 1 Sam. xiv. 45. 2 Sam. xxiv. 14.

† This was in Rephidim, where Joshua fought with Amalek a whole day, and when Moses' hands being tired, he was supported by Aaron and Hur. Exod. xvii. 8—14. And hence we may know what those have to expect who do any injury to the saints of God;

up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and *utterly destroy* all that they have, and spare them not: but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."*

Saul having assembled an army of 210,000 men, proceeded against Amalek, and lay wait in the valley, having first sent messengers to the Kenites, to separate themselves from that people,† lest he should destroy both together. The Kenites obeyed the admonition, and Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah, until thou comest to Shur, over against Egypt, and destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword: but spared Agag alive, and the best of the sheep and oxen, and all that was good; and destroyed only what was vile and without value.

Here again Saul was guilty of another express act of disobedience; and appears to have been so conscious of it, as to wish to have avoided Samuel; for on coming to Mount Carmel, he went about, and passed on down to Gilgal. Still however upon Samuel coming to him, he had the effrontery, and must we not say, the hypocrisy, to exclaim, "blessed be thou of Jehovah, I have performed the commandment of Jehovah. But Samuel said, what meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" How pitiful was the excuse of the deluded monarch?

and how unceasingly he watches over their interests, and revenges their wrongs.—Deut. xxv. 17, 18, 19. Rom. xii. 19.

* 1 Sam. xv. 2, 3.

† This affords another strong encouragement to assist and relieve the people of God; for the reason which Saul, speaking as from God, gives for sending them this friendly intimation was "for ye shewed kindness to all the Children of Israel."—Exodus xviii. 10. 19. Numb. x. 29. 32. The Kenites were the descendants of Hobab or Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses.—1 Bp. Hall, 304. Matt. x. 42 So God could not punish Sodom till Lot was removed to a place of safety Gen. xviii. 25. xix. 22.

"The people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed." Surely this, if true, made the sin the greater; for was it of the cattle of the Amalekite that sacrifices were to be offered unto God—he to whom nothing was to be offered that was unholy?* But it was not true; for the real object was either to increase or to spare their own herds and flocks; and therefore, at bottom, not only avarice, but avarice of the worst kind; viz. defrauding Jehovah of the prescribed amount of sacrifice. Besides, why spare Agag? Was he to be spared for a sacrifice? Surely rather for a ransom.

For this serious offence the prophet pronounces the judgment of God, "Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry: because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." Upon this Saul expressed contrition, and laid hold on the skirt of Samuel's mantle, who, in breaking away from him, rent it, when the prophet said, Jehovah hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and given it to a neighbour of thine that is better than thou. At the earnest intreaty however of Saul, that Samuel would continue to honour him before the people, the prophet turned again after him, and it is said that Saul worshipped Jehovah. Samuel, however, to fulfil the judgment of God, ordered Agag to be brought before him, and whilst hewing him in pieces before Jehovah in Gilgal, we find the prophet declaring one at least of the causes which justified the proceedings of God respecting him.—"As thy sword hath made

* Numb. xviii. 9, 10.

women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women."*

After this Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul to Gibeah; but Samuel mourned bitterly for the rejection of the monarch,† and even interceded all night with Jehovah for a reversal of the sentence.‡

Jehovah having rejected Saul from being king over his people, yet had respect so far to their wishes, that he provided a successor who should be a different character; a man, as he is emphatically called, after God's own heart; and as the great Saviour of mankind descended from the loins of this monarch, we may well suppose, that this purpose of God, which had existed from all eternity, was the chief reason for his fixing upon David, the son of Jesse. Jehovah, however, did not communicate to Samuel which of the sons of Jesse he had selected for this distinguished honour, but merely told him to fill his horn with oil and go, for that he had provided himself a king among the sons of Jesse, the Bethlehemite.

It appears that Jesse had eight sons, the eldest seven of whom passed in succession before Samuel, who, under the teaching of Jehovah, rejected them all; but upon David, the eighth, who was then keeping his father's sheep, being sent for, Jehovah said to the prophet, "arise, anoint him: for

* 1 Sam. xv. 33. Harm. iv. 225. Burder, O. L. 439.

And we have here another instance of the forbearing mercy of God towards the most abandoned nations. The battle of Rephidim, where the irreversible decree went forth from Jehovah, took place 400 years before this event, and God forbore the execution, till now the period was arrived when their iniquities were full. Exod. xvii. 16.—So when God promised the Land of Canaan to Abraham, he told him he could not have it for 430 years, for this very same reason, viz. that the iniquities of the Amorites were not yet full. Gen. xv. 16.

† 1 Sam. xv. 35. ‡ 1 Sam. xv. 11.

this is he."* Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of Jehovah came upon David, from that day forward, so Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

One cannot read the next remark of the sacred writer, without the most painful emotions: "but the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from Jehovah troubled him." We are not informed what particular species of affliction this was; but it was evidently such as to be discernible to the attendants of the monarch, who said to him, "behold now an evil spirit from God troubleth thee:" and they recommended him to send for a skilful player upon the harp, in order to cure him. Saul having consented, and required to know where such a person might be found; one of them answered, "behold I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him." Most of our Bibles place this transaction in the same year with that of the anointing by Samuel; but there is probably some defect in the chronology, as it is not very likely that David, who was the youngest son of Jesse, and quite a youth, could have distinguished himself, and obtained such a character, in so short a time, or even have had the opportunity to display the talents here ascribed to him; so that we may take it for granted, that some years had intervened before this introduction to Saul had taken place.

However that was, Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and desired that he would send David, his son, who was with the sheep. With this request, Jesse complied; and according to the custom of the east, from all antiquity, sent the

* 1 Sam. xvi. 12.

monarch an humble, but respectful present of bread, wine,* and a kid.

Saul was at first much pleased with David, and, it is said, loved him greatly, and made him his armour bearer, and required Jesse to allow him to become one of his attendants. And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand, so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.†

How long David remained at the court of Saul, we are not informed; but it is clear that he had returned home to his father, and resumed his pastoral occupations, before the Philistine war began—for it is said, "David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem."‡

The Philistines having collected a large army at Shochoh, of Judah, Saul drew up his army in the valley of Elah. Whilst the two armies lay in this position, Goliath of Gath, a giant in stature, and a man of war from his youth, came out from the Philistines' host, and defied the army of Saul, from day to day, and proudly conscious of his own bodily strength, offered to put the issue of the contest upon a single combat between himself and any champion the Israelites could produce, vauntingly exclaiming, "give me a man, that we may fight together."§

There can be no doubt that all this was preordained of God, to shew forth his own glory, and not only to give his servant David a high reputation and renown amongst the people whom he was afterwards to govern, but to inspire the Philistines, and other surrounding nations, with terror at his name.

* The Hebrew word means literally a skin of wine; what the quantity therefore was we have no means of knowing. 1 Sam. xvi. 20.

† 1 Sam. xvi. 21—23. ‡ 1 Sam. xvii. 15. Burder, O. C. 1130.

§ 1 Sam. xvii. 10.

Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah, the three eldest sons of Jesse, had followed Saul to this war; and their father sent David to them with some parched corn and bread, together with a present of cheeses to their commanding officer. David arrived at the trench as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle; and, having saluted his brethren, whilst he talked with them, Goliath came forth from the Philistine army, and repeated his impious defiance, according to his daily practice.

Not only were Saul and all the men of Israel dismayed, and greatly afraid, and fled from the giant, when they saw him; but even Jonathan, who had so lately performed the magnanimous deed before related, and who, it afterwards appears, was certainly present, did not discover any inclination to accept the challenge.

Upon David, however, the giant's insult produced a different effect; for when he saw the men of Israel affrighted and flying before him, he inquired, "what shall be done to the man who killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? And the people answered him, it shall be that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel."

Eliab having heard the speech of David, and from which he collected he was about to offer to meet the giant, was filled with envy and self-reproach, and with great unkindness said, "why camest thou down hither, and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thy heart; for thou art come down, that thou mightest see the battle." Nothing could be more unjust than this reproof; for Eliab could not but know from the present and message he had received from his

father, Jesse, that it was by his express command his youngest brother had come to the camp. David, however, discovered no resentment; but merely replied, "what have I done now? Is there not a cause?" Should not every Israelite feel a holy indignation, to hear an uncircumcised Philistine defy the armies of the living God? And ought not some Israelite to step forward and venture his life, to wipe away his reproach?

In consequence of similar remarks to other persons in the army, Saul became at length acquainted with them, and sent for David, who immediately addressed the monarch, "let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, thou art not able to go against this Philistine, to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." To whom David made this beautiful reply, replete alike with manly courage and pious faith, "thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, go, and the Lord be with thee."*

Here again we must remark how this action of patriotism and self-devotion for his country's good would have been extolled, if, like those of the Decii and the Horatii, it had been found in the annals of paganism; but because it was

* 1 Sam. xvii. 34—37.

performed by one of the Bible worthies, it is treated with comparative neglect and contempt.

Another remark suggests itself: one can hardly imagine what must have been the feelings of the Israelitish officers and captains, that could allow such a youth thus to expose himself to the rage and fury of the giant, whilst they stood at a distance in security; and more especially of Saul himself, who, we are informed, was taller by the head than all his brethren, and probably than all his own army, and therefore the fittest person, both in stature and dignity, to accept the challenge: we say we cannot easily imagine what his feelings must be, whilst buckling his armour on to David.

Saul would have had David wear his own armour; but as the latter had not, at this period, been accustomed to wear any, he found it cumbersome, and probably it prevented him from using his limbs with sufficient activity; he therefore laid it aside, and proceeded to meet Goliath with his staff and a sling, and five small stones,* a mode of offence, in which he was most likely well skilled.

When the Philistine saw David, who was a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance, approaching, he disdained him, and exclaimed in a rage, am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. But David replied to the Philistine, "thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air,

* The brook whence David fetched the stones is still seen. Wilson's Travels in the Holy Land, i. 190.

and to the wild beasts of the earth: that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands."*

David having slain the Philistine, by smiting him in the head with a stone out of his sling, ran and stood upon him, and cut off his head with his own sword; upon which the Philistines fled, and thereupon the men of Israel and of Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until the valley and gates of Ekron, and the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem.†

Saul, it appears, either from the difference in his dress, or from the effects of the disease to cure which, by playing on the harp, David had formerly been sent for, had forgotten him ;‡ for he inquired whose stripling he was, but Abner, the captain of the host, could not tell him. And upon being presented to Saul, with the head of Goliath in his hand, he said, whose son art thou, young man? when David replied, I am the son of thy servant, Jesse, the Bethlehemite.

Upon this occasion it was, that the friendship was conceived between David and Jonathan, which, in the sequel of their story, affords so many touching and pathetic incidents. For when David had made an end of speaking unto Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul; and Saul took David that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved

* 1 Sam. xvii. 45—47. † Burder, O. L. 443.

‡ Unless, as suggested in p. 20, there is some anticipation of events. Gray's Key, 173.

him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.*

An occurrence took place, however, as the army was returning from this victory over the Philistines, which laid the foundation for that enmity against David, on the part of Saul, which no fidelity, no forbearance, no integrity, on the part of the former, could ever eradicate. The women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. And the women answered one to another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten housands. And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, they have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can

Goliath, amongst other things, had been the king's eldest daughter; but hitherto Saul had omitted to redeem that pledge. Now, however, with the basest intentions, he offered to give him Merab to wife; adding, be thou valiant for me, and fight the Lord's battles: for, said he, let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him. It does not appear from the sacred history, whether David really wished to avoid or to embrace this offer, as his answer may be considered either as an expression of modest diffidence, of his own unworthiness, or a delicate refusal of a favour he did not covet. It seems, however, that when the period arrived, perhaps after some victory, or a prescribed period of time, that Merab should have been given to David, Saul gave her unto Adriel, the Meholathite, to wife; but we are not told that David ever shewed any resentment, or made any complaint to Saul upon this subject.

Saul, however, had another daughter named Michal, and it is said she loved David, from which we may presume, that the attachment was mutual; and to the existence of that attachment we may probably ascribe the cautious answer David gave to Saul as to Merab, and the little anxiety he betrayed at her being given to another. This attachment, however, gave Saul another opportunity of shewing his malice and envious spirit against David, for the thing pleased him, in the hope that his daughter might be a snare to David, and that the hand of the Philistines might be against him, wherefore Saul said to David, thou shalt this day be my son-in-law, in the one of the twain.

By the command of Saul, his servants communed secretly with David, and said, behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee; now, therefore, be the king's son-in-law. Still, however, David was cautious, for he said, "seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?"

When this answer was returned to Saul, he desired them to tell David, that he desired not any dowry ; but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies ; and that, in the hope that David would fall by their hands.

We here see a melancholy instance how far a man, who neglects God, and forsakes his laws, may be given up to the utmost extent of folly, as well as of sin and wickedness ; for it is repeatedly said, that Saul knew the Lord was with David : he knew, also, that he was himself rejected, and that the kingdom was destined for David : and he had lately seen how signally the Lord had sustained and protected him : how then could he imagine it would be a matter of difficulty for him to slay 100 Philistines? As soon as David was assured of Saul's declaration, it pleased him well, and he and his men went forth and slew 200 Philistines, and brought their foreskins to Saul, who disguising his disappointment and chagrin, gave him his daughter Michal for a wife.

This union, however, only served to increase the apprehensions of Saul, so deep rooted was his malignity ; for he became David's enemy continually : but the Philistines having gone forth, David acted more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that he rose into high estimation.

The more, however, that David prospered, the more he became an object of distrust and hatred to Saul, who no longer affected to conceal his malice ; for he not only practised with his servants to destroy him, but hesitated not to try to involve his own son Jonathan, in the dreadful crime of murder. But Jonathan delighted much in David, and therefore told him, that Saul, his father, sought to kill him, and besought him to take heed to himself until the morning, and to abide in a secret place, and hide himself.

But the friendship of Jonathan was not satisfied with merely giving David a warning ; he proceeded to serve him more effectually, for he said, I will go out and stand beside

my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee, and what I see, that will I tell thee. Accordingly Jonathan spoke good of David unto Saul his father, and thus pathetically pleaded for his friend, even for the man whom he knew was to be the means of depriving him of the crown and royal dignity. "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David: because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good: for he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and did rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause? And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, as the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain. And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past."*

It proved, however, that this reconciliation was either deceitful on the part of Saul, or that his envy of David was so inveterate, that it was liable to be rekindled upon the slightest occasion; for a fresh war having broken out with the Philistines, and David having fought with, and slain them with a great slaughter; the evil spirit came again upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand; and David, notwithstanding his former narrow escapes, once more attempted to relieve his sovereign's malady, by playing before him; when Saul again sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but David slipt away out of Saul's presence, and escaped that night.

These repeated attempts, and as frequent escapes, had driven the unhappy monarch to a state of frenzy; so that, laying aside all reserve, he sent messengers to beset David's

* 1 Sam. xix. 4—7.

house, and to slay him in the morning; from which new danger he was delivered by his wife Michal letting him down through a window during the night; and in order to afford sufficient time for his escape, she pretended he was confined to his bed with illness, in which she placed an image to represent him.* Saul having remonstrated with his daughter for allowing his enemy, as he chose to call David, to escape, Michal alleged (what no doubt was quite false) that David had threatened to kill her.

David's first step was to flee to Samuel in Ramah, and tell him all that Saul had done, and, no doubt to ask his counsel and guidance; and he and Samuel dwelt in Naioth.

As soon as Saul had discovered the retreat of David, being now determined to effect his purpose, he sent messengers to apprehend him; and although we are sure that all the previous deliverances of David had been provided by a faithful God, yet that God now chose to honour his servant by a still more signal and marked interference on his behalf. For when the messengers of murder made their appearance at Naioth, they found a company of prophets in the act of

that day, and all that night. And the circumstance gave rise to a proverb in Israel, " is Saul also among the prophets ?"*

Who cannot in this relation discover the forbearing mercy of God ? After such determined contempt of the intentions of God, so plainly intimated by his conduct, to Saul's messengers; who would not have expected that the repetition of the insult to the offended Majesty of Heaven would have called forth the almighty vengeance; and instead of seeing the wicked and murderous rage of the impious monarch merely neutralized, and himself compelled only to lay on the ground and prophesy, disarmed and helpless, we might have anticipated that he would have been struck to the earth by the thunderbolts of divine vengeance.

So certain also is the security of those who place their trust under the wings of the Lord God of Israel.† If an Elisha is pursued by the troops of a wicked Ahab, the Lord will interpose horses and chariots of fire for his preservation;‡ and if the life of David is sought by the murderous and devoted Saul, Saul himself and his assassins shall, in order to preserve God's chosen servant, be rendered physically incapable of accomplishing their sanguinary purpose !

After this miraculous deliverance, David fled from Naioth, and came to Jonathan, pathetically enquiring, in the anguish of his soul, what have I done ? what is mine iniquity ? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life ? Jonathan assured him of his protection, and the next day, being the feast of the new moon,§ when David, from his office, ought to sit at meat with the king, they agreed that he should absent himself, under pretence of attending a yearly sacrifice for all his family in Bethlehem. And it was settled

* Sam. xix. 24. † Ruth ii. 12. ‡ 2 Kings vi. 17.

§ New Moon, that is, the first day of the month. 1 Sam. xx. 5. Aus. Bayley in Loco. Burder, O. C. No. 316.

between them, that if Saul did not discover anger at the absence of David, Jonathan should shoot some arrows beside the stone Ezel; and if he gave directions of one description to a lad who was to be waiting, David was to understand that Saul had no evil purpose against him; but, on the contrary, if Saul exhibited disappointment and passion, Jonathan was to give different directions, so that David might know that Saul had determined upon his destruction.*

The fidelity and affection of Jonathan to David, is the more amiable and affecting, as it is manifest he was well aware of the consequence of his friend's future exaltation; for he said to him, "O Lord God of Israel, when I have sounded my father, about to-morrow any time, or the third day, and behold, if there be good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and shew it thee; the Lord do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father. And thou shalt not only, while yet I live, shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David, every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul."†

On the first day of David's absence, Saul smothered his secret purpose; but on the second day, when he found from Jonathan that he had given David leave to go to Bethlehem, he could no longer conceal his intentions, or restrain his violence; but thus reproached Jonathan, "thou son of the

* 1 Sam. xx. 20. 22. † 1 Sam. xx. 12—17.

perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die. And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, wherefore shall he be slain? What hath he done? And Saul cast a javelin at him, to smite him. So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David."*

Jonathan having communicated with David, according to the signal agreed upon, they met at an appointed place, and took an affectionate farewell of each other; for David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, the Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.†

David proceeded to Nob, a city of Benjamin, and being in want of provision, and, by a falsehood, concealing from Ahimelech that he had fled from Saul, obtained some of the consecrated bread from that priest; and also the sword of Goliath, which was laid up there in a cloth behind the ephod. Doeg, an Edomite, and chief herdsman to Saul, was at Nob, when the above transaction took place, and David, probably afraid he would betray him, fled to Achish, King of Gath; but the people of that city exclaimed, "is not this David, the king of the land? Did they not sing one to another of him in

* 1 Sam. xx. 30—34. † 1 Sam. xx. 41, 42.

dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?" David, therefore, laid these words to heart, and no doubt interpreted them as expressive of jealousy and apprehension as to his probable future greatness; and therefore to secure himself from violence, he feigned madness, and was permitted to escape to the cave of Adullam; where, when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down to visit him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them; and there were with him about four hundred men.*

We are not however to suppose that none came to him but those of refuse character; for we are afterwards informed, that amongst others who joined him, at this time, were Jashobeam, the Hachmonite, who slew three hundred with his spear at one time; Eleazar, the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, who defied and smote the Philistines at Pasdammim, till his hand clave to the sword, after the Israelites had all fled; Shammah, the son of Agee, the Hararite, who performed a

lehem, which the Philistines then held by a garrison;* and the monarch exclaimed, Oh, that one would give drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, that is at the gate! And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the Lord. And said, my God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest.†

It would seem that the vengeance of Saul had driven the whole of David's family to take refuge, and become wanderers with him; for having proceeded to Mizpeh of Moab, he entreated the king to receive his father and mother under his protection, until the providence of God should otherwise provide. With this request that monarch readily complied, while David remained in the hold.‡

At this time, also, some of the Gadites separated themselves unto David, into the hold to the wilderness, men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.§ These were of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least was over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand. These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflown all his banks; and they put to flight all them of the valleys, both toward the east and toward the west. And there came of the Children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David. And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them, if ye be come peaceably unto

* 1 Chron. xi. 16. † 1 Chron. xi. 17—19. 2 Sam. xxiii. 15. 17.
‡ 1 Sam. xxii. 4. § 1 Chron. xii. 8.

me to help me, mine heart shall be knit unto you: but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in mine hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it. Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.*

Whatever this place of security was, God did not intend his servant should remain there, for the prophet Gad said to him, "abide not in the hold, depart, and get thee into the land of Judah:" and this, no doubt, was chiefly that David might be at hand, and in the midst of his brethren, ready to take possession of the kingdom when the appointed days of Saul should arrive.

David therefore departed, and came into the forest of Hareth, and as soon as Saul, who then abode in Gibeah, under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand,† and all his servants standing about him, discovered where David was; he said unto his servants, "Hear now, ye Benjamites: will the son of Jesse give *every one* of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds; that all of you have conspired against me, and there is none that sheweth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait as at this day?"‡ With a view to ingratiate himself with the infuriated monarch, Doeg the Edomite, replied to this address, by communicating the interview between David and Ahimelech, which so enraged

* 1 Chron. xii. 14. 18. † His sceptre. Burder, O. C. 322.
‡ 1 Sam. xxii. 7, 8.

him, that he sent for the latter, and all the house of his father, Ahitub, and all the priests of Nob: when he thus addressed them: "Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait as at this day?" Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said; "and who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house? Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute any thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father; for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more." And the king said, thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou and all thy father's house. And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him, turn, and slay the priests of Jehovah; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of Jehovah. And the king said to Doeg, turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew, on that day, four score and five persons that did wear a linen ephod. And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword. And one of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David. And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the priests of Jehovah. And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg, the Edomite, was there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house. Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life, seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.*

* 1 Sam. xxii. 13—23. Burder, O. C. 323.

The Philistines having approached the City of Keilah, in Judah,* and robbed their threshing floors, David inquired of Jehovah whether he should go and smite them, and received a command to do so; but his companions having expressed fear and apprehension at encountering a Philistine army with so small a number, David repeated his enquiry of Jehovah, when he condescended to answer yet more distinctly, "arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand. So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah."†

We cannot pass over this portion of the narrative without remarking how important it is to seek for the divine direction in every transaction of life. In the affair at Nob, David omitted to adopt this wholesome procedure, and consequently fell into sin, and drew upon himself and the inhabitants of that city many painful events; whereas, now that he applied to Jehovah for guidance, he succeeded almost miraculously, and the whole matter proceeded satisfactorily.

As soon as Saul heard that David had entered into Keilah, a fenced city, he vainly imagined he was secure of his prey; and that he could easily encompass him with his army, although he had so recently‡ had such striking evidence how little his soldiers were to be depended upon; and had seen how signally God had interfered for the protection of his chosen servant.

David, aware that Saul was secretly practising mischief against him, directed Abiathar, the Priest, to bring the ephod; and said, O Jehovah, God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O

* Josh. xv. 44. † 1 Sam. xxiii. 5. ‡ 1 Sam. xxii. 17.

Jehovah, God of Israel, I beseech thee tell thy servant. And Jehovah said, he will come down. Then said David, will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And Jehovah said, they will deliver thee up.*

Upon receiving this answer, David withdrew from Keilah with his companions, who had now encreased to the number of 600, and "went whithersoever they could go;" that is wandered from place to place, uncertain where to fix their habitation. They first abode in the strong holds of a mountain, in the wilderness of Ziph; and Saul pursued him from day to day, but God protected him.

It was whilst David remained concealed in a wood in the wilderness of Ziph, that Jonathan came to visit him, and when their last interview took place. And what was the errand of this faithful and affectionate friend? He went to David in the wood, and strengthened his hand in God. And he said unto him, fear not, for the hand of Saul, my father, shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth. And they two made a covenant before Jehovah: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.†

The next deliverance which David experienced, was from the treachery of the Ziphites, who gave information to Saul, that David was in the holds of the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon; and offered to lay an ambush for him. The miserable monarch readily embraced their offer, and sent the Ziphites before him, declaring, that he would search David throughout all the thousands of Judah. David having received information of Saul's approach, came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon: and whilst Saul and his men approached towards one side of the mountain, David and his men kept on the

* 1 Sam. xxiii. 10—12.
† 1 Sam. xxiii. 16—18. Harmer, i. 250.

other side, waiting for a favourable opportunity to escape, as Saul and his party compassed David and his party round about to take them.

Here again his servant's extremity was God's opportunity; for just at the moment when we may suppose David's faith was at the highest exercise, a messenger came to Saul, saying, haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Saul, therefore, immediately abandoned his pursuit of David, and went after the Philistines; whence they called that place Sela-hammah-lekoth. And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at Engedi.*

Intent on the accomplishment of his wicked and murderous purpose, as soon as ever Saul had driven back the Philistines, he resumed his operations against David, with even more determined malice; for he took 3000 chosen men, and went after David, upon the rocks of the wild goats in the wilderness of Engedi. And as he passed by some sheep cotes, there was a cave† into which Saul entered, as it would seem, alone, and probably to refresh himself, and take a short sleep, whilst his men were traversing the wilderness in search of David; for so probably the expression of covering his feet‡ should be understood, although another idea has been occasionally supposed.

God had so provided, that in the sides of this cave, David and his armed band were at that very time actually concealed; and they were not a little rejoiced to see him, who had been so long thirsting for the blood of their master, thus providentially placed in their power, and exclaimed, "behold, the day of which Jehovah said unto thee, behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee." But not so David:

* 1 Sam. xxiii. 29.

† Such a cave, and of ample dimensions, was seen by Pocock. Ad. Clarke.

‡ Judges, iii. 24. Ruth, iii. 7.

for moving cautiously out of his hiding place, whilst Saul no doubt was asleep, he privily cut off the skirt of the King's robe. And so tender was David's conscience of offering any disrespect towards the person of the anointed of Jehovah, that his heart immediately smote him, even for this trivial and well-meant act; and he said unto his men, Jehovah forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the anointed of Jehovah, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord. So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul.*

Conscious of the rectitude of his own intentions, strong in faith upon the promises and protection of his God, and in the hope that, by this incident, he might be able to convince the judgment and soften the malice of Saul; instead of flying from his presence as formerly, David followed him immediately out of the cave, and, with the utmost humility and reverence, and bowing his face to the earth, he thus addressed him, "My lord the king! wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, behold, David seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that Jehovah hath delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee: and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the anointed of Jehovah. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. Jehovah judge between me and thee, and Jehovah avenge me of thee; but mine hand shall not be upon thee. As saith the proverb of the ancients, wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. After whom is the King

* 1 Sam. xxiv. 6, 7.

of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea. Jehovah, therefore, be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand." And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And he said to David, thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when Jehovah had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore Jehovah reward thee good, for that thou hast done unto me this day. And now, behold I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. Swear now, therefore, unto me by Jehovah, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house. And David sware unto Saul.*

Saul had all along professed, that the motive for his cruel persecution of David, was the conviction that David had a secret purpose to take away his life; and he urged this as the justification of his conduct, both to the Benjamites and to Ahimelech;† it was therefore with peculiar propriety that God so ordained, as that David might not only have an opportunity of rescuing his character from this reproach in the sight of all Israel; but also of convincing Saul himself, if he really entertained any such apprehension, that David had no evil purpose towards him or his family. It might have been expected too, that this procedure of David, and especially after such declarations as Saul made, and the apparent feeling which he exhibited, would have induced him

* 1 Sam. xxiv. 9—22. † 1 Sam. xxii. 8. 13.

to restore David to his confidence, and have preserved him from any further malicious attempts; but unhappily, we shall find from the sequel, that this was not the case; and this, it would seem David was well aware of, for notwithstanding the apparent reconciliation, and not intending to place any confidence in Saul, he not only did not ask for any reciprocal pledge of amity and good will, but immediately after the conference, he and his men retreated again into their hold.*

According to the sacred writer, it was soon after this interview that the prophet Samuel died, when all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah: immediately after which David arose, probably thinking that now the holy prophet was dead, Saul would proceed to greater violence than before, and went down to the wilderness of Paran, on the borders of the land of Canaan.

Whilst David was wandering in Maon, there was a man of the name of Nabal, of the house of Caleb, who possessed great wealth, and amongst other substance, 3000 sheep and 1000 goats, which were feeding in Carmel, of Judah, near to Maon; but David and his men had never, in their utmost necessities, committed any plunder upon any part of this man's cattle, who it is said was a churl, and evil in his doings.

Whilst David was in Paran, which was in the wilderness, and had now been wandering about for a long while without a settled habitation, he heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep in Carmel, and he thought that in his present necessity, and especially at such a time of festivity and abundance, he might with propriety make an appeal to the generosity, if not to the gratitude, of Nabal. He therefore sent a respectful embassy of ten young men, with orders to greet him, and to say to him that liveth in prosperity, peace be both to thee

* 1 Sam. xxiv. 22.

and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand, unto thy servants, and to thy son David.* The rich churl answered this civil and respectful application, with all the insolence of overgrown wealth; "Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?"†

It is highly improbable that Nabal could have been ignorant either who David was, or of the special purpose of Jehovah concerning him; and still less of his forbearing and perhaps protecting conduct towards his own cattle in Carmel, and we cannot therefore wonder, that David was exceedingly angry when he received this insulting message. Although the rash resolve he made is incapable of justification upon any principles whatever, for he said, surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him, and he hath requited me evil for good. So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light, a single male.‡ And he commanded every man to gird on his sword, and he girded on his own sword, and there went up after him about 400 men.§

This unjustifiable purpose of vengeance, into which David

* 1 Sam. xxv. 6—8. Harmer, i. 239.
† 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. ‡ 1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22. § 1 Sam. xxv. 13.

had been thus hastily betrayed, was happily diverted by the prudence of one of Nabal's servants, and by the address of Abigail, the wife of Nabal. This faithful domestic having overheard both the message and reply, and rightly apprehending the probable result, went to his mistress, and said, "Behold David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master, and he railed on them. But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt; neither missed we any thing as long as we were conversant with them when we were in the fields: they were a wall unto us, both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. Now, therefore, know and consider what thou wilt do, for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him."*

Abigail lost no time in preparing a magnificent present of 200 loaves, two skins of wine, five sheep ready dressed, five measures of parched corn, 100 clusters of raisins, 200 cakes of figs, with which she sent her servants forward towards David, that his wrath might be, in some measure, apppeased by the present, before she made her appearance herself. When she approached, (and we are told she was a woman of a beautiful countenance, as well as of a good understanding) she lighted from her ass, and bowed herself to the ground, and fell on her face before the feet of David, and said, "Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid. Let not, my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I, thine handmaid, saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send. Now therefore, my lord, as Jehovah liveth,

* 1 Sam. xxv. 14—17.

and as thy soul liveth, seeing Jehovah hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. And now this blessing, which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord: let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord. I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for Jehovah will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of Jehovah, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days. Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with Jehovah, thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling. And it shall come to pass, when Jehovah shall have done to my lord, according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel; that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when Jehovah shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid." And David said to Abigail, blessed be Jehovah, God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand. For, in very deed, as Jehovah, God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, a single male. So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.*

* 1 Sam. xxv. 24—35. Harmer, i. 240.

When Abigail returned to Nabal, she found him in such a state of inebriety, after a great feast, probably at the conclusion of his sheep-shearing, that she was unable to communicate to him what had passed; but when he was sober, she told him; and the recollection of his danger, his sense of shame for the excess of which he had been guilty, or the immediate visitation of God, produced such an effect, that his heart died within him, and became as a stone, and he died in about ten days.

When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, blessed be God, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for Jehovah hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head.* And Abigail became the wife of David.

The malice and envy of Saul were not yet exhausted; for the Ziphites, who seem to have been always ready to do David a mischief, came to Gibeah, and told Saul that David hid himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is is before Jeshimon; upon which Saul took with him 3000 chosen men of Israel, and went to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph; and pitched in the hill of Hachilah, before Jeshimon, by the way; but David abode in the wilderness, and saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. David, therefore, sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

Upon this occasion it pleased Jehovah to afford David another opportunity of convincing Saul of the purity of his intentions; for being come to the place where Saul had encamped, he discovered a trench in which Saul's tent was pitched, with Abner, the son of Ner, the captain of his host; and the people were pitched round about him.

David, no doubt under the influence of the Spirit of God,

* 1 Sam. xxv. 39.

having enquired who would go down with him to Saul's camp, Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, and brother of Joab, expressed his willingness to do so. They accordingly went together in the night, and found Saul sleeping within the trench,* and his spear† stuck in the ground at his bolster; but Abner and the people lay round about him. Abishai was anxious to put an end to this state of perpetual hostility at once, and asked David to permit him to smite Saul with his own spear, promising to do it so effectually, that it should not be necessary to repeat the blow; but David said, destroy him not; for who can stretch forth his hand against the anointed of Jehovah, and be guiltless?

Determined, however, as David was not to injure Saul himself, he well knew what his destiny was to be; for he immediately exclaimed, in the spirit of prophecy, "As Jehovah liveth, Jehovah shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. Jehovah forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against Jehovah's anointed; but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go. So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster: and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from Jehovah was fallen upon them."‡

David thought it right to make Saul acquainted with the danger to which he had again been exposed, and with the forbearance he had exercised towards him; and therefore went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill, afar off from Saul's camp, but within hearing, probably of a trumpet;§

* Harmer, iii. 412. † An ensign of royalty. Harmer, i. 43.

‡ 1 Sam. xxvi. 12. Burder supposes the cruse to have been the same as the ancient clepsydra. O. L. 466.

§ Burder, O. L. 467.

and he chose to make the communication by a somewhat taunting reproach upon Abner, who had so negligently slept upon his watch, and thereby endangered his monarch's life. "Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? Wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? For there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. This thing is not good that thou hast done. As Jehovah liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the anointed of Jehovah. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster. And Saul knew David's voice, and said, is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, it is my voice, my lord, O king. And he said, wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand? Now, therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If Jehovah have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before Jehovah: for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of Jehovah, saying, go, serve other gods. Now, therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of Jehovah: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains. Then said Saul, I have sinned: return my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly. And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it. Jehovah render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for Jehovah delivered thee into my hand to-day; but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the anointed of Jehovah. And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of Jehovah, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation. Then

Saul said to David, blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail."*

After this they separated, and Saul returned to his place; and it does not appear that he ever pursued after David any more; for either at length convinced that God was resolved to preserve him from his vengeance, or, perhaps, really softened by this last act of forbearance, we find that even when some of his officious courtiers informed him that David had fled to Gath, Saul sought no more again for him.†

David too went on his way, not, however, placing much confidence in Saul's declaration; for he said in his heart, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me, than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand."‡

David, went first to Achish, King of Gath, who received him, with all his family and armed bands, into his own city; but David, justly apprehending some dispute might arise, petitioned the Philistine monarch to give him Ziklag, with which request Achish complied; and that city, which had been originally included in the lot of Judah,§ and afterwards assigned to the tribe of Simeon,‖ but taken by the Philistines, became thus united to Judah ever after.

Whilst David kept himself close in Ziklag, he received a considerable accession of strength; for there came to him several mighty men, armed with bows, who could use both the right hand and the left, in hurling stones, and shooting arrows out of a bow, and these were of the tribe of Benjamin, and of Saul's brethren, besides those of the other tribes.¶

* 1 Sam. xxvi. 15—25.

† 1 Sam. xxvii. 4. ‡ 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. § Josh. xv. 31.

‖ Josh. xix. 5. ¶ 1 Chron. xii.

David having invaded the Jeshurites, and the Gezerites, and the Amalekites, who were remnants of the old inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt, left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel; and saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring tidings to Gath, saying, with a policy wholly unworthy of his character, and the faith displayed by him upon other occasions; lest they should tell on us, saying, so did David, and so will be his manner, all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.* On his return from this expedition, Achish enquired in what direction he had made his incursion; and David, with an unjustifiable equivocation, answered him, that he had been against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites. And Achish believed David, saying, he hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him, therefore he shall be my servant for ever.†

So confident was Achish of having secured the services of David, that when the Philistines shortly afterwards gathered their armies together, in order to invade the possessions of Israel, he called upon him and his men to march with them. David made no objection; but replied, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do, upon which Achish declared he should be perpetual captain of his guard.

The Philistine army having penetrated as far as Shunem, in the lot of Issachar, Saul collected the hosts of Israel, and encamped in Gilboa; but when he saw the number of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled; not the less, probably, from having ascertained that David and his troops were amongst their number, and from the apprehension that the time was now arrived when God

* 1 Sam. xxvii. 11. † 1 Sam. xxvii. 12.

intended to give him the kingdom, and to make use of the Philistine army for accomplishing this great and important purpose. Samuel was dead, and the Israelitish monarch was now sensible of his loss; for although, in this emergency, he enquired of Jehovah, Jehovah answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

Either from a sense of duty, or in order to make a shew of zeal for the service of Jehovah, Saul had, some time before this crisis, put away those who had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. But notwithstanding that, now in this time of extremity, and forsaken, as he was, by his God, he was weak and wicked enough to disguise himself, and seek from a woman at Endor, who was reputed to have a familiar spirit, for that information and counsel which Jehovah had denied him. It was Samuel, however, that Saul was anxious to see; and which shews that, amidst all his rebellion and misconduct, he had still some reverence for that holy prophet; and it pleased God to permit either Samuel* to revisit the earth, or some supernatural representation of him to appear to Saul; not for the purpose of comforting or relieving his disquietude, but to shew him the fearful truth, that the time was at length arrived when his enormities were to be requited, and vengeance was to be poured out upon him and his house; for when Saul uttered the piercing complaint, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do: the spirit replied, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing Jehovah is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And Jehovah hath done to him as he spake by me: for Jehovah hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it

* Gray's Key, 173.

to thy neighbour, even to David: because thou obeyedst not the voice of Jehovah, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath Jehovah done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover, Jehovah will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: Jehovah also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines. Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid.*

When the lords of the Philistines discovered that David and his men formed the rear-guard of the troops of Achish, they insisted upon that monarch sending these auxiliaries away, exclaiming, Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands? Let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us; for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?†

With this demand Achish complied, although very reluctantly, not having the least suspicion of David's fidelity, or of the part which he would act in the approaching battle; and David expressed himself upon that occasion, and acted throughout this whole affair, in so guarded a manner, that it is not easy to know how he intended to have conducted himself, if God had not thus providentially delivered him out of the snare. So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.‡

Upon his march with the troops of Achish, some of the tribe of Manasseh united themselves to David, and as he returned back towards Ziklag, Adnah, and others, who were

* 1 Sam. xxviii. 16—20. † 1 Sam. xxix. 4. 1 Chron. xii. 19.
‡ 1 Sam. xxix. 11.

captains of thousands, in that tribe, and they helped David against the band of the rovers: for they were all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host. For at that time, day by day, there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God.*

Whilst David had marched with the Philistine army, the Amalekites had taken advantage of his absence to invade the south of Ziklag, and had smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire; and had taken the women captives, that were therein; they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.† Amongst the captives were David's own wives, Ahinoam, the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, the Carmelitess: and David was greatly distressed, for the people spake of stoning him, for the loss of their sons and daughters. David, however, greatly encouraged himself in Jehovah his God, and ordered Abiathar, the priest, to bring the ephod; when David enquired of Jehovah, whether he should pursue and overtake the Amalekites. Jehovah having returned a gracious answer, David and his 600 men proceeded to the brook Besor, where he was forced to leave 200 who were unable to continue the march.

Marching onwards, they found an Egyptian who had been unable to keep up with the Amalekites in their retreat from Ziklag, and who had been without food for three days and nights, and they brought him to David. After giving him some refreshment, the Egyptian undertook to shew David which way the Amalekites had retreated; and David came upon them unexpectedly, whilst they were in disorder, and spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah. And David smote them from the twilight, even unto the even-

* 1 Chron. xii. 21, 22. † 1 Sam. xxx. 1, 2.

ing of the next day; and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels and fled. And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives. And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil nor any thing that they had taken to them: David recovered all. And David took all the flocks, and the herds, which they drave before those other cattle, and said, This is David's spoil.*

On returning to their companions at the brook Besor, those who had marched forward and fought, were not disposed to allow those who had remained at the brook, any share of the spoils; but this selfish disposition David wisely overruled by his authority, declaring, that as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike. And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.†

When David returned to Ziklag, he sent presents from the spoil, taken in this expedition, to various friends, elders of Judah, in Bethel, in south Ramoth, in Jattir, in Aroer, in Siphmoth, in Eshtemoa, in Rachal, in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, in the cities of the Kenites, in Hormah, in Chorashan, in Athach, in Hebron, and in all the places where himself and his men were wont to haunt.

Whilst David had been engaged in the pursuit of the Amalekite marauders, Saul had fought his last and fatal battle, in which the Philistines followed hard upon him; and slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchishua, his sons; and the battle went sore against Saul, and he was sore wounded of the archers. Determined upon self-destruction, that usual last resource of the forsaken of God, and of the de-

* 1 Sam. xxx. 16. 20. † 1 Sam. xxx. 24, 25.

termined profligate, he ordered his armour bearer to thrust him through with his sword; and upon his refusal, he took a sword himself, and fell upon it; and when his armour bearer saw it, he imitated the same dreadful example.

This victory was so decisive, that the Israelites who dwelt on the other side of the valley, and on the other side of Jordan, forsook their cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them. And on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found the bodies of Saul and his three sons, in mount Gilboa; and they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people. And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth; and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan. And when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there. And they took their bones and buried them under a tree at Jabesh,* and fasted seven days.†

So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against Jehovah, even against the word of Jehovah, which he kept not; and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; and enquired not of Jehovah: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David, the son of Jesse.‡

* From whence David afterwards took them, and buried them in the sepulchre of Kish, in Zelah of Benjamin. 2 Sam. xxi. 12—14.

† 1 Sam. xxxi. 8—13. ‡ 1 Chron. x. 13, 14.

DAVID.

DAVID had been returned to Ziklag only two days, when a man came to him from the camp of Israel, with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head, and informed him that Israel had fled, and that Saul and Jonathan were slain. In answer to more particular enquiries, he most probably feigned many of the circumstances which he related, in order to ingratiate himself with David; by pretending that he had, at the request of Saul, slain him himself; and, as evidence of the fact, delivered to David the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, insignia with which David was no doubt well acquainted. The reward which this Amalekite met with was far different from what he anticipated; for David said to him, How! wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the anointed of Jehovah? And he ordered one of his attendants to slay him; for he said, thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the anointed of Jehovah.*

And David and all his men rent their clothes, and mourned and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul and Jonathan his son, and for the people of Jehovah, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. If we call to mind what pleasing anticipations of the future had been formed by these illustrious friends, David and Jonathan, when the latter, in beautiful simplicity and self-denial, had said,† Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and when the former, no doubt, had already determined that Jonathan, if not a sharer in the throne, should occupy a distinguished post of honour in his kingdom; and longed for the opportunity of shewing him how highly he appreciated the friendship and attachment Jonathan had exhibi-

* 2 Sam. i. 16. Burder, O. L. 475, 476. † 1 Sam. xxiii. 17.

ted towards him, during the period of his adversity:—if we call these circumstances and recollections to mind, we can, in some small degree, enter into the feelings of David, when he uttered the following beautiful and pathetic lamentation, "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished."*

A. C. 1056. David, conceiving, no doubt, that the period was arrived when he was to assume the diadem of Israel, but unwilling to take any measure towards such an important result without the express permission of Jehovah, enquired of him expressly whether he should go up into any of the cities of Judah; when Jehovah directed him to go up

* 2 Sam. i. 19—27. See a beautiful Latin version of this song from Kennicott, apud Ad. Clarke.

unto Hebron.* David went up accordingly, with his wives and children, and all his men, with their wives and children, and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron; and the men of Judah came, and anointed him king over the house of Judah.

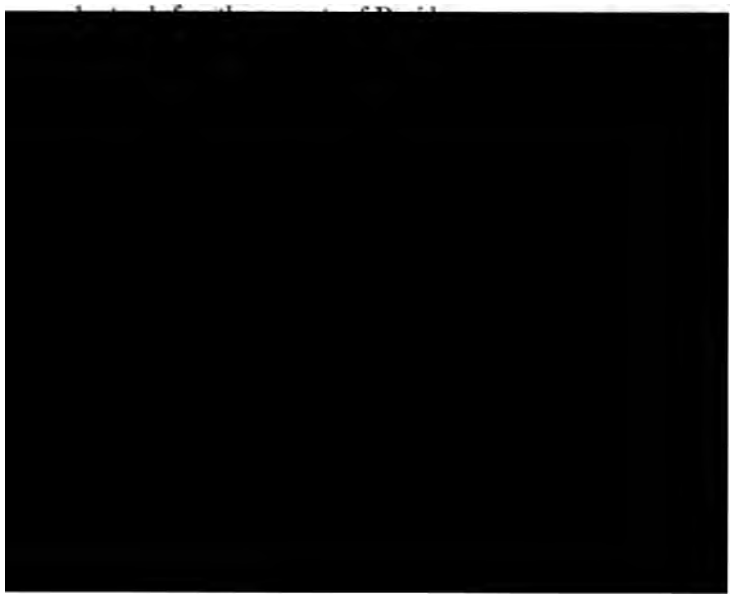
We have already seen numerous instances of the respect and attention which David invariably exhibited towards Saul; and he now gave a delicate illustration of that feeling, with respect to the men of Jabesh Gilead, who, no doubt from a grateful remembrance of their deliverance by his hands, at the beginning of his reign,† had preserved the remains of Saul and his three sons; for he sent messengers unto them, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of Jehovah, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. And now Jehovah shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Therefore, now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.‡

By the death of Jonathan, Abinadab, and Melchishua, Ishbosheth, who was then forty years old, became the survivor; and Abner, the son of Ner, brought him to Mahanaim, and made him king over all Israel; but the house of Judah followed David. Abner, however, no doubt contemplated the subjugation of David, and relying upon his numbers, and perhaps his own popularity, he attempted to excite a tumult, which he hoped might end in a general war, which might place all the tribes of Israel and Judah under the authority of his master, and, if so, virtually under his own; for it would seem that Ishbosheth was a very imbecile character.

* The metropolis of the tribe of Judah. Ad. Clarke.

† See page 10. ‡ 2 Sam. ii. 5—7.

With this view, Abner led out the servants of Ishbosheth to Gibeon, which occasioned a corresponding movement on the part of David; for Joab, and his other servants, went forth, and met Abner's party by the pool of Gibeon; the one party sitting down on one side of the pool, and the other party on the other side of the pool. Abner, in prosecution of his plan, proposed to Joab that their young men should play, or have a sham fight together, which Joab, although he could hardly be insensible of Abner's secret object, did not think it right to refuse. Accordingly, twelve men of Benjamin went out from Abner's party, and twelve from the servants of David, but they evidently came together in great animosity; for each man caught one of the opposite party by the head, and thrust his sword into his side, without attempting any defence or trial of skill, so that the whole twenty-four fell down dead; and the place was called Helkath-hazzurim.* This rencontre was followed, according to Abner's intention, by a general battle, which did not end, however, agreeably to his wishes; for he and the men of Israel were



armour from one of the young men, as a sufficient trophy. Whether Asahel really thought himself a match for Abner, or considered this proposal as a sort of treason to his commander, he kept pressing on Abner, which left the latter no other resource than to run him though with a spear, and he fell down and died.

Joab and Abishai had also continued the pursuit, and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that lies before Giah, by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon. And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together, after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of a hill. Abner now thought it prudent to beat a parley, and called upon Joab to put a stop to the pursuit; upon which the latter, who probably had received instructions from David to confine his operations to self defence, blew a trumpet, and all his people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more. Abner crossed over Jordan, and returned to Mahanaim, through Bithron, with the loss of 360 men; whereas Joab's loss amounted only to 19, besides the swift footed Asahel. And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.*

The war, however, thus begun, was continued; and David waxed stronger and stronger; but the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker. Abner and Ishbosheth having quarrelled about Rizpah, one of Saul's concubines, the former became very wroth, and sware solemnly, that he would translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba. And accordingly he sent messengers to David, proposing to make a league with him, and to bring all Israel

* 2 Sam. ii. 32.

unto him. Aware of the purpose of God, David acceded to this proposal, and made only one stipulation, viz.: that he should bring David's wife, Michal, with him, whom Saul, when he had driven David from his presence, had given to Phalti, the son of Laish.* In order to accomplish which object, David also sent messengers of his own to Ishbosheth, who immediately complied and sent, and took Michal from Phalti, the son of Laish; and her husband went with her, weeping behind her, as far as Bahurim, when, by the command of Abner, he quitted her, and returned.†

Abner, having won over the elders of Israel and Benjamin to his purpose, went to David in Hebron, to report his success, and took with him twenty men, for whom David made a feast; after which Abner went away, promising that he would gather all Israel to make a league with David, that he might reign over all that his heart desired.

Abner had hardly quitted Hebron, when Joab, with a band of soldiers, returned from some expedition, and brought in

As soon as David was made acquainted with this act of assassination, he declared his own innocence, and that he and his kingdom were guiltless before Jehovah for ever, from the blood of Abner, the son of Ner; and pronounced a curse upon the head of Joab and all his father's house, that there should not fail from his house one that had an issue, or that was a leper, or that leaned on a staff, or that fell on the sword, or that should lack bread*.

Not satisfied with this, David ordered a public funeral for Abner, and buried him in Hebron, going himself as chief mourner, and compelling Joab also to attend the funeral,† and making all the people rend their clothes and gird themselves with sackcloth. Neither would he eat any meat till the sun went down, and all the people were pleased: for whatever the king did pleased them. And David said, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, be too hard for me: Jehovah shall reward the doer of evil, according to his wickedness."‡

As soon as Ishbosheth heard that Abner was slain, his hands became feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled; and Baanah and Rechab, two of his officers, assassinated him as he lay on his bed in the heat of the day, and cut off his head, and took it to David in Hebron, and said, Behold the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, thine enemy, which sought thy life; and Jehovah hath avenged my lord the king

* 2 Sam. iii. 30.

† One of the first acts of Paul, Emperor of Russia, after the decease of his mother, Catherine II., was to exhumate the corpse of his father, Peter III., and have it reinterred with all the pomp and ceremony of a royal funeral; compelling Count Orloff, his reputed murderer, to attend as PRINCIPAL MOURNER!

‡ 2 Sam. iii. 38, 39.

this day of Saul, and of his seed.* But David said to them, as Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, when one told me, saying, behold Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings: how much more then when wicked men have slain a righteous person, in his own house upon his bed? Shall I not, therefore, now require his blood at your hand, and take you away from the earth? And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner, in Hebron.†

Immediately after the death of Ishbosheth, there being none of the issue of Saul left, except Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, who was now only five years old, and had been lame from his infancy,‡ all the tribes of Israel came to David unto Hebron, saying to him, behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel, and Jehovah said to thee, thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel. So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and King David made a league with them, in Hebron, before Jehovah; and they anointed David king over Israel.§

Either upon this occasion, or progressively during the war occasioned by the death of Saul, David had collected a large army, for the following are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of Jehovah. The children of Judah, that bear shield and spear,

* 2 Sam. iv. 8. † 2 Sam. iv. 9—12.
‡ 2 Sam. iv. 4. § 2 Sam. v. 1—3. 1 Chron. xi. 1.

were six thousand and eight hundred, ready armed to the war. Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred. Of the children of Levi, four thousand and six hundred. And Jehoiada was the leader of the Aaronites, and with him were three thousand and seven hundred; and Zadok, a young man, mighty of valour, and of his father's house, twenty and two captains. And of the children of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, three thousand, for hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul. And of the children of Ephraim, twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers. And of the half tribe of Manasseh, eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name to come and make David king. And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment. Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double heart. And of Naphtali, a thousand captains, and with them with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand. And of the Danites, expert in war, twenty and eight thousand and six hundred. And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand. And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand. All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel, and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king. And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them. Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, brought bread on

asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen; and meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep, abundantly: for there was joy in Israel.*

Amongst the various idolatrous nations which inhabited the land of Canaan, at the time of the Exodus, and who were to be extirpated† by the express command of Jehovah, were the Jebusites, who were descendants of Canaan,‡ the son of Ham, the third son of Noah. They dwelt in the mountains§ of Palestine, and part of their country was in the lot of Benjamin, and part in the lot of Judah, neither of which tribes, however, had ever been able to drive them out,‖ or take Jerusalem, their capital city, which was so impregnable, both by nature and art, as almost to bid defiance to the missiles then made use of in sieges.

It was so strong at the accession of David, that when he approached the city with his troops, the Jebusites said unto him,¶ except thou take away the blind and the lame,** thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. David immediately issued a proclamation, that whosoever should get up to the gutter, and smite the Jebusites first, and the lame, and the blind, that were hated of David's soul, should be chief and captain: upon which Joab went first up,†† and the castle or strong hold of Sion, the chief dependance of the Jebusites was taken, and obtained the promised reward. And David thereupon established himself in the castle, whence that quarter of Jerusalem was called the city of David. And he built the city round about even from Millo round about and inward: and Joab repaired the rest

* 1 Chron. xii. 23—40. † Exodus, xxxiii. 2. xxxiv. 11.
‡ Gen. x. 16. 1 Chron. i. 14. § Numb. xiii. 29.
‖ Josh. xv. 63. Jud. i. 21. xix. 11. ¶ 2 Sam. v. 6.
** Burder, O. C. 341. 2 Russell's Connect. 167. and Ad. Clarke.
†† 1 Chron. xi. 6.

of the city. And David went on, and waxed greater and greater, for Jehovah of Hosts was with him.*

As soon as the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they came up to seek him, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim; and when David heard of it, he went down to the hold; and he enquired of Jehovah whether he should encounter them, and if he should be successful: and Jehovah promised to deliver them into his hand. And David came to Baal Perazim, and smote them there, and said, Jehovah hath broken forth upon mine enemies by mine hand, as the breach of waters. And there they left their images, and David and his men burned them with fire.†

Enraged at this defeat, and the loss of their idols, the Philistines returned to the charge in such numbers, as again to spread themselves over the valley of Rephaim. When David enquired of Jehovah, he ordered him not to go up after them, that is, not to engage in a pitched battle with them, perceiving that their enemies were now in such force, that his chosen servant, and his army, would be in danger, unless he took the affair more immediately into his own hands. God therefore directed David to fetch a compass about them, or get behind them, and lay an ambush over against some mulberry trees; he was to bestir himself when he heard a noise in the tops of the mulberry trees,‡ and go out to battle, for that then Jehovah would go out before him, and smite the host of the Philistines. And David did so, as Jehovah

* 2 Sam. v. 9, 10. 1 Chr. xi. 9. † 2 Sam. v. 20. 1 Chr. xiv. 12.

‡ "How is it that such supernatural directions and assistances are not communicated now? Because they are not asked for, because they are not expected; and they are not expected, because men have not faith: and they have not faith, because they are under a refined spirit of atheism, and have no spiritual intercourse with their Maker. Who believes that God sees all things, and is every-

had commanded him, and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.* And the fame of David went out into all lands: and Jehovah brought the fear of him upon all nations.†

It was probably the fame of these two great victories that induced Hiram, king of Tyre, to send messengers to David with cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons, wherewith they built him a house: and David perceived that Jehovah had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.‡

The holy ark of God, whose name is called by the name of Jehovah of Hosts, that dwelleth between the cherubims; § sometimes termed the ark of the covenant,‖ and sometimes the ark of testimony,¶ and which had been made in the wilderness, by Bezaleel,** pursuant to the command of Jehovah to Moses,†† and where Jehovah had promised to meet with him, and to commune with him from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims, of all things which he would give him in commandment unto the children of Israel,‡‡ had remained with them, and constituted their comfort and distinction amongst the nations, till the fatal battle of Aphek,§§ when Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, the high priest, were both slain: and Jehovah, for the humiliation of his people, and as it proved in the sequel for the real advancement of his own glory, suffered this sacred symbol to be taken by the Philistines.

where? Who supposes that he concerns himself with the affairs of his creatures? Who acknowledges him in all his ways? Who puts not his own wisdom, prudence, and strength, in the place of God Almighty? Reader, hast thou faith in God? then exercise it, cultivate it, and thou mayest remove mountains." Ad. Clarke.

* 2 Sam. v. 25. † 1 Chr. xiv. 17.

‡ 2 Sam. v. 11, 12. 1 Chr. xiv. 1, 2. § 2 Sam. vi. 2.

‖ Josh. iii. 6. ¶ Exod. xxv. 21. ** Exod. xxxvii. 1.

†† Exod. xxv. 10. ‡‡ Exod. xxv. 22. §§ 1 Sam. iv. 11. See p. 2.

This unhallowed host, however, soon found they had acquired too dangerous an inmate; for not only was their great idol Dagon dashed to pieces before it, but the hand of God was heavy upon the men of Ashdod, of Gath, and of Ekron, and wherever the ark remained; so that there was a deadly destruction throughout all their cities, the inhabitants being affected in so unusual a manner, as to bespeak the finger of God; and in their agonies they exclaimed, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people."*

The Philistines having placed the ark upon a new cart, with golden emerods and golden mice as a trespass offering, sent it on its way, drawn by two milch kine.† It arrived at Bethshemesh, when the Levites took out the jewels of gold, and the men of Bethshemesh offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed sacrifices unto Jehovah; but having presumed to look into the ark, the outside even of which was not to be seen uncovered by the Levites who carried it,‡ 50,070§ of them were smitten with a great slaughter.

Terrified with this disaster, they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjathjearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of Jehovah: come ye down, and fetch it up to you. And the men of Kirjathjearim came, and fetched the ark of Jehovah, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar, his son, to keep the ark of the Lord.‖

It is remarkable that, during the whole reign of Saul, no mention whatever is made of the ark, and more especially that after Samuel's death, and in his greatest extremity, that

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[illegible] 2 Sam. vi. 2.

[illegible] Gen. xxxvii.

[illegible] iv. 11. 8

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monarch betook himself to the practisers of witchcraft, rather than to the appointed means of communication between God and his people. No doubt he was well acquainted with what had befallen the Philistines and the men of Bethshemesh, and, conscious of his own awful departure from God, he dared not encounter this holy symbol; but still it might have been expected he would have applied to some of the priests and Levites.

David, however, was no sooner in a state of comparative tranquillity, than, anxious to repossess this palladium of Israel, he consulted with the captains of thousands, and hundreds, and with every leader, and said unto all the congregation of Israel, "If it seem good unto you, and that it be of Jehovah our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites, which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us: and let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people."*

"So David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000, from Shihor of Egypt, even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjathjearim. And David arose, and went up with all the people that were with him to Baalah,† that is to Kirjathjearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, Jehovah, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it. And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, that was in Gibeah; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart. And David and all the house of Israel played before

* 1 Chron. xiii. 2—4. † 1 Chron. xiii. 6.

Jehovah with all their might, and with singing, and on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psaltries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals, and on trumpets."*

An incident, however, took place upon this occasion, which materially diminished the general joy; for the oxen which drew the cart having stumbled, and shook the ark, Uzzah put forth his hand and touched it, in order to steady it; when the anger of Jehovah was kindled against him, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark,† and there he died before God.‡

David discovered an unsanctified spirit in being displeased upon this occasion, and called the name of the place Perez Uzzah; and he was so afraid of Jehovah that day, that he said, How shall I bring the ark of Jehovah to me? and instead of attempting to remove it into the city of David, he carried it into the house of Obededom, the Gittite. And the ark of God continued in the house of Obededom, the Gittite, three months: and Jehovah blessed Obededom, and all his household.§

Upon being told that Jehovah had blessed the house of Obededom, because of the ark of God, he prepared a place, and pitched a tent for it in the city of David; but, before he attempted to remove it again, he took care to have every thing properly arranged according to the law of Moses, that no further miscarriage might take place. For he said, none ought to carry the ark of God, but the Levites, for them hath Jehovah chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever. And David assembled the children of Aaron and the Levites to the number of 862, and he called for Zadok and Abiathar, the priests; and for the Levites, Uriel,

* 2 Sam. vi. 1—5. 1 Chron. xiii. 1—8. † Numb. iv. 15.
‡ 1 Chron. xiii. 10. § 2 Sam. 6. 11. 1 Chron. xiii. 14.

Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Aminadab; and said unto them, ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of Jehovah, God of Israel, unto the place that I have prepared for it. For because ye did it not at the first, Jehovah our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.*

And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders, with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded,† according to the word of Jehovah. And David spake to the chief of the Levites, to appoint their brethren to be singers, with instruments of music; all which was done accordingly. And David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, out of the house of Obededom, into the city of David, with gladness. And it came to pass, that when the Levites that bare the ark of Jehovah had gone six paces, and God helped them, David sacrificed seven bullocks and seven rams. And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah, the master of the song, with the singers; and David danced before Jehovah with all his might, and was girded with a linen ephod. Thus David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psaltries and harps.‡

And they brought the ark of Jehovah, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before Jehovah. And as soon as he had made an end of the first

* 1 Chron. xv. 12, 13. † Numb. iv. 15.

‡ 2 Sam. vi. 12—16. 1 Chron. xv. 25—28.

duty, he proceeded to bless the people in the name of Jehovah of Hosts; and appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of Jehovah, and to record, and to thank and praise Jehovah, God of Israel, with instruments of music continually before the ark of the covenant of God; and delivered into the hand of Asaph and his brethren the following psalm:* "Give thanks unto Jehovah, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek Jehovah. Seek Jehovah and his strength, seek his face continually. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth: O ye seed of Israel, his chosen ones. He is Jehovah, our God; his judgments are in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; when ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it. And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people; he suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations. For great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols: but Jehovah made the heavens. Glory and honour are

* The text says first—probably because the whole of the psalms were delivered by him afterwards for similar purposes.

in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place. Give unto Jehovah, ye kindreds of the people, give unto Jehovah glory and strength. Give unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name; bring an offering, and come before him: worship Jehovah in the beauty of holiness. Fear before him all the earth; the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein. Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of Jehovah, because he cometh to judge the earth. O give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. And say ye, save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise. Blessed be Jehovah, God of Israel, for ever and ever. And all the people said Amen, and praised Jehovah."*

So David left Asaph and his brethren to minister before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah continually, as every day's work required: and Obededom and Hosah to be porters: and Zadok, the priest, and his brethren, the priests before the tabernacle of Jehovah, in the high place that was at Gibeon; to offer burnt offerings unto Jehovah, upon the altar of the burnt offering continually, morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of Jehovah, which he commanded Israel. And with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, (with trumpets and cymbals, and the musical instruments of God), who were expressed by name, to give thanks to Jehovah, because his mercy endureth for ever.† And then, with a princely magnificence, he distributed amongst them the royal bounty, so that every heart

* 1 Chron. xvi. 8—36. † 1 Chron. xvi 37—42.

might be made glad, for he gave to the whole multitude, both male and female, to every one a loaf of bread, a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine: so all the people departed, every one to his own house.*

Having thus discharged his public duty, the monarch retired into the bosom of his family, in order to bless his own household; when he experienced the mortification of finding, that his pious conduct had excited the scorn and contempt of his wife Michal. Through a window of the palace, she had viewed her husband dancing and playing before Jehovah, and she despised him in her heart. Whether this feeling arose from a want of a proper sense of the solemnity of the act, a total indifference to God's ordinances, or some remorse that David should have the honour of restoring the ark of God, which her father had so many years neglected, she tauntingly exclaimed, "How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!" and David said unto Michal, "It was before Jehovah, who chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of Jehovah, over Israel: therefore will I play before Jehovah. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of: of them shall I be had in honour." Therefore Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child unto the day of her death.†

David being now firmly seated on the throne, and having completed a palace for his own residence, and observing how differently the ark of Jehovah was circumstanced, conceived the pious design of erecting a magnificent temple for its re-

* 2 Sam. vi. 19. 1 Chron. xvi. 3. 43.
† 2 Sam. vi. 20—23. 1 Chron. xv. 29.

ception, and communicated his intention to Nathan, the prophet, who does not appear to have expressed any disapprobation in the first instance.

But the same night, the word of Jehovah came to Nathan, with the following prohibitory, though at the same time encouraging, message for David, "Thus saith Jehovah, thou shalt not build me a house to dwell in;* for I have not dwelt in a house, since the day that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and walked in a tabernacle. Wheresoever I have walked with all the children of Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, why have you not built me a house of cedars? I took thee from the sheep cote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be ruler over my people Israel; and I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. Moreover, I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in a place of their own, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as before time, and as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel; moreover, I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee, that the Lord will build thee a house. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall

* We afterwards find, that either upon this occasion or some other, God assigned as a reason to David why he was not to build the Temple, that he had been a man of war and a shedder of blood, and that such a work must be performed by a different character. 1 Chron. xxii. 8, 9. xxviii. 3.

be of thy sons, and I will establish his kingdom.* He shall build a house, for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son; if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee; and thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for evermore.

And David came and sat before Jehovah, and said, who am I, O Jehovah, God,† and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God, for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Jehovah, God; and is this the manner of man, O Jehovah, God? What can David speak more to thee for the honour of thy servant? for thou, Jehovah, God, knowest thy servant. O Jehovah, for thy word's sake,‡ and according to thine own heart, hast

* It is remarkable that this son was even pointed out and promised, by the name of Solomon, before even David's sinful intercourse with his mother first commenced. 1 Chron. xxii. 9. xxviii. 6.

† Preferring to adopt the incommunicable name, JEHOVAH, throughout this work, whenever it is so written in the original Hebrew, instead of the English word, *Lord*, which frequently embarrasses the sense; I am aware of an apparent awkwardness when that name stands coupled, as in this place, with the word, Elohim, which is plural, and should be rendered, Jehovah the Gods. I prefer, however, adhering to the common translation in this respect; referring the reader to Kidder on the Messiah, Parkhurst, and other works of that description, for the learning connected with the word *Elohim*.

‡ 2 Sam. vii. 21. Servant's sake, 1 Chron. xvii. 19.; but there can be little doubt the difference has arisen from the similarity between the Hebrew letters Daleth and Resh. Thus we see a similar

thou done all this greatness, in making known all these great things to make thy servant know them. Wherefore thou art great, O Jehovah, God; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make him a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou redeemedst to thee out of Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel, to be a people unto thee for ever, and thou, Jehovah, art become their God. Therefore now, O Jehovah, let the word which thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said. Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, Jehovah of Hosts is the God of Israel, even a God over Israel; and let the house of David, thy servant, be established before thee. For thou, O Jehovah of Hosts, God of Israel, hast told thy servant, that thou wilt build him a house: therefore thy

out the remnants of the former inhabitants, for he smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Methegammah, or Gath, and their other towns out of their hands. He next advanced against the Moabites, and smote them, destroying two thirds of them, and bringing the rest under subjection to him; for they became his servants, and brought gifts; and thus the celebrated prophecy of Balaam* was fulfilled. He also smote Hadarezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, unto Hamath, as he went to recover his border, and establish his dominion by the river Euphrates.† And David took from him 1,000 chariots, 7,000 horsemen, and 20,000 footmen, houghing all the chariot horses, except enough to supply 100 chariots.

The Syrians from Damascus having marched to relieve Hadarezer, David advanced to meet them and slew 22,000; and put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts. And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem; and from Betah and Berothai‡, cities of Hadarezer, he took a great quantity of brass, with which Solomon afterwards made the brazen sea, the pillars, and various vessels.

David gat him a great name as he returned from smiting the Syrians, for Abishai, one of his generals, engaged with a large army of Edomites in the valley of salt, and slew 18,000 men.§

When Toi,‖ king of Hamath, heard of the victories which David had obtained over Hadarezer and his allies, he sent

* Numb. xxiv. 17.

† Harmer suspects that this might be Tadmor in the Wilderness, or Palmyra. Vol. iii. 369.

‡ 2 Sam. viii. 8. Called Tibhath and Chun, 1 Chron. xviii. 8.

§ 2 Sam. viii. 13. 1 Chron. xviii. 12.

‖ 2 Sam. viii. 10. Called Tou, 1 Chron. xviii. 10.

his son Hadoram* to David, to salute him, and to bless him, because he had vanquished Hadarezer, with whom Toi also had been engaged in war: and Hadoram brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass; all which David also dedicated unto Jehovah, as well as the silver and gold of all the nations which he subdued, viz: of Syria, of Edom, of Moab, of the children of Ammon, of the Philistines, of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadarezer.

And David put garrisons into all the cities of Edom, and they became tributary to him, and Jehovah preserved David whithersoever he went.

And David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice to all his people; and appointed Joab captain of the host, Jehoshaphat recorder, Zadock and Ahimelech priests, Seraiah† scribe, and Benaiah captain of the Cherethites and Pelethites.‡

Mindful of his oath to Saul, and his love for Jonathan, David caused an enquiry§ to be instituted, whether any of the posterity of Saul were yet alive, in order that he might shew kindness to them for Jonathan's sake. And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.‖ Ziba, one of Saul's servants, having introduced Mephibosheth into his presence, he fell on his face, and did reverence, when David said, fear not, for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul, and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

* 1 Chron. xviii. 10. Called Joram, 2 Sam. viii. 10.
† 2 Sam. viii. 17. Called Shavsha in 1 Chron. xviii. 16.
‡ Burder, O. L. 491. § 2 Sam. ix. 3. ‖ 2 Sam. iv. 3.

Then the king said to Ziba, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his house. Thou, therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat; but he shall eat bread always at my table, as one of my sons. And Mephibosheth dwelt at Jerusalem, and had a young son, whose name was Micha, and Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants, all of whom were servants to Mephibosheth.*

Upon the death of Nahash, the king of Ammon, David, bearing in mind the civilities he had formerly received from that monarch, sent a respectful embassy to his son Hanun, to condole with him on his loss, and to congratulate him on his own accession. The Ammonitish counsellors, either through ignorance or perverseness, formed the notion that the real object of this embassy (as indeed has but too often been the case), was to spy into the actual state of their country; and the young monarch, weakly yielding to their suggestions, treated the ambassadors of the King of Israel with the extremest indignity, by shaving one half of their beards, and cutting their garments off in the middle. So great was this insult considered by David, that he ordered the ambassadors to stop in the city of Jericho, and not make their appearance in Jerusalem, till their beards had grown again.

It may be well imagined that David was disposed to resent such an injury, and it is probable he had given some expression to his resentment, although we are not informed he had actually prepared for warlike measures, until he heard that the Ammonitish monarch, anticipating the probable results of his own insolence and aggression, was proceeding to form an army, chiefly composed of Syrian auxiliaries, whom he hired

* 2 Sam. ix. 12.

for 1,000 talents of silver. The Ammonites formed a separate army by themselves.

To meet this formidable army, David sent a strong force under the command of Joab, who, finding himself placed between the two hostile armies, selected all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians; and sent the rest of the army, under his brother Abishai, against the Ammonites; with the understanding, that in case of need, they were mutually to succour each other: but Joab having defeated the Syrian army, the Ammonites fled before Abishai into their cities.*

In order to revenge this defeat, Hadarezer, King of Zobah, whom David had so lately defeated,† drew his forces from beyond the river Euphrates, and sent them to Helam, under the command of Shophach. Upon this David gathered all Israel together, and passing over Jordan, fought a pitched battle before Helam, and slew near 50,000 men, including their commander-in-chief; upon which the Syrian princes immediately sued for peace, and no longer afforded any assistance to the Ammonites.‡

David, having determined to finish the war with this devoted nation, sent Joab with a large army to besiege Rabbah, their royal city, but remained himself at Jerusalem. Joab's expedition having proved successful, he sent messengers to his sovereign, saying, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters;§ now, therefore, gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; lest I take the city, and it be called after my name. And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. And he took the king's

* 2 Sam. x. 1 Chron. xix.

† 2 Sam. viii. 3—7. ‡ 2 Sam. x. 19. 1 Chron. xix. 9.

§ That is, I have cut off the water of the city. Ad. Clarke.

crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold, with the precious stones: and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance. And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.*

It was during the early part of this siege, whilst David was, perhaps improperly, staying at Jerusalem, and whilst his army was warring against the Ammonites, that the melancholy occurrence took place, which involved the Israelitish monarch in such a complication of flagitious iniquity. So much has been written upon this subject by every commentator, that it will probably be better in this place only to touch generally upon the leading features of a transaction, which we would gladly avoid noticing altogether.

Uriah, the Hittite, was one of David's bravest officers,† and, at this time, absent from Jerusalem, and fighting his sovereign's battles under the command of Joab. The monarch having accidentally seen Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, in a situation calculated to excite unholy desires, yielded to their influence, and having signified his wishes, obtained but too ready a compliance.

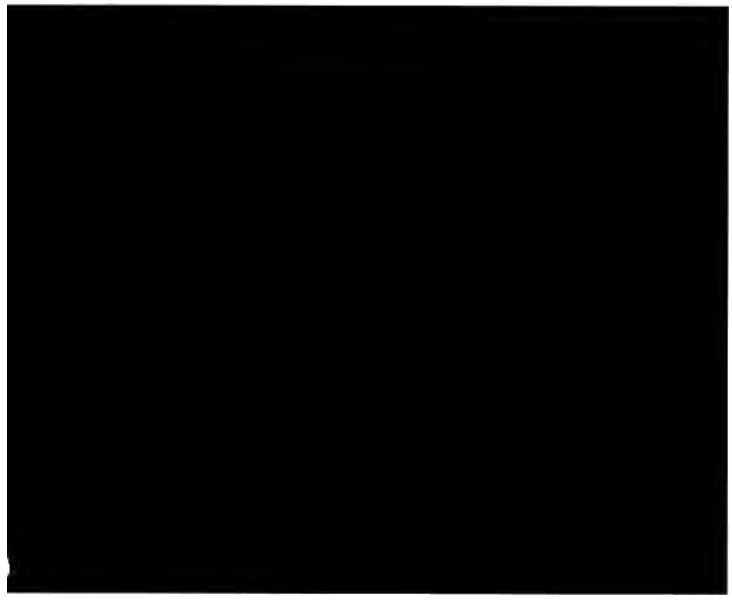
The first object of David, like all impenitent sinners, being to conceal his crime, he sent orders to Joab, that Uriah should come immediately to Jerusalem, in the confident expectation that he would immediately repair to his own house, and associate with his wife; and thus, if she should prove pregnant, it would create neither suspicion nor scandal.

Whether Uriah had received any intimation of his wife's infidelity, and his sovereign's baseness, or whether he was

* 2 Sam. xi. 1. xii. 26—31. 1 Chron. xx. 1—3. † 1 Chron. xi. 41.

restrained from visiting his own house and family, by the especial providence of God, who had determined that David's sin should be exposed, and that he should thereby be instructed in the depths of iniquity in his own heart; Uriah refused to go to his own dwelling, and that so steadily, that although the monarch descended so low as to make Uriah drunk for that express purpose, he was not to be diverted from his resolution. And we may easily imagine what a stinging reproach Uriah's remark must have made upon the conscience of his sovereign, when he reflected upon the contrast which it formed to his own conduct, "the ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents, and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat, and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing."*

Unable by this means to secure a protection from discovery, David conceived the horrible design of adding murder to adultery, and actually accomplished that object by the most base and atrocious means: for he sent Uriah back with his own



from her subsequent conduct; for David sent for her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son.

The transaction however displeased Jehovah, and he sent to David the prophet Nathan, who thus beautifully but pointedly, brought conviction and contrition upon the fallen monarch. "There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: but the poor man had nothing save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the way-faring man that was come unto him: but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, as Jehovah liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: and he shall restore the lamb four-fold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. And Nathan said unto David, THOU ART THE MAN! Thus saith Jehovah, God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of Jehovah to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite, to be thy wife. Thus saith Jehovah, behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house,

and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah. And Nathan said unto David, Jehovah also hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of Jehovah to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."*

The child died, but David afterwards had by this same Bathsheba, his successor Solomon, whom Jehovah loved; and he called his name Jedidiah,† because of Jehovah.

It is perhaps one of the most mysterious transactions in the divine economy, that the genealogy of the divine Saviour, who knew no sin, and who was, and was to be, designated

* 2 Sam. xii. 1—14. "*Thou art this son of death*, and thou shalt restore this lamb FOURFOLD. Is it indulging fancy too much to say David was called, in the course of a just providence, to pay this *fourfold* debt: to lose *four* sons by untimely deaths, viz: this son of Bathsheba, on whom David had set his heart, was slain by the Lord; Ammon, murdered by his brother Absalom; Absalom, slain in the oak by Joab; and Adonijah, slain by the order of his brother Solomon, even at the altar of the Lord. The sword of calamity did not depart from his house, from the murder of the wretched Ammon by his brother, to the slaughter of the sons of Zedekiah before their father's eyes, by the King of Babylon. His *daughter* was dishonoured by her own brother; and his *wives* contaminated, publicly, by his own son. How dreadfully, then, was David punished for his sin! Who would repeat his trangression to share in its penalty! Can his conduct ever be an inducement to, or an encouragement in sin?—Surely, no. It must ever fill the reader and the hearer with horror; behold the goodness and severity of God! Reader, lay all these solemn things to heart." Ad. Clarke. It was probably upon this occasion that David wrote the 51st Psalm. SCOTT.

† Or, beloved of Jehovah.

emphatically the Holy One, was appointed to be traced through more than one apparently polluted channels; but so it is, and all we have to do with it is to adore and wonder.

After the taking of Rabbah, other wars arose with the Philistines; in one of which David, waxing faint, had nearly been slain by Ishbibenob, one of the sons of the giant, when he was preserved by Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, who slew the Philistine. Upon this occasion the men of David sware unto him, "Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel."* And after this there was another battle, where Lahmi, a brother, and Sippai and another son of Goliath, the Gittite, were respectively slain by Sibbechai, the Hushathite, Elhanan, the son of Jair, and Jonathan, the son of Shimea, one of David's brothers.†

It is neither safe nor lawful for fallible man to construe particular acts of divine providence into judgments upon individuals; but can we wonder if, after the complicated ruin and disgrace which David had brought upon Uriah and his house, a righteous God should see fit to punish the monarch in some sort after a similar manner? Nor is it without its use, that sinful man should know that although particular sins may be pardoned, so that his salvation may be secured, yet that it rarely happens but that such sins meet with some proportionate punishment in this life; and that there is a much greater certainty of retribution for every evil action than is generally imagined.

In the case of David, however, we have the authority of God himself‡ to come to such a conclusion, as that monarch soon found to his sorrow, when the peace of his own family became invaded by the vices and rebellion of his children. Absalom, who was David's son by Maacah,§ had a fair sister

* 2 Sam. xxi. 16, 17.

† 1 Chron. xx. 4—8. ‡ 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12. § 2 Sam. iii. 3.

of the name of Tamar, with whom Ammon, another of the monarch's sons by Ahinoam,* became enamoured. By the advice of his cousin Jonadab, who was a subtle, and without doubt, a wicked man, he feigned sickness, and when his sister came, in compliance with his request, to make him a couple of cakes, he ravished her; and, as frequently happens in similar cases, immediately conceived as strong an aversion as he had before entertained a passion for her, and turned her out of doors; upon which she returned home to her brother Absalom's house.

At first Absalom advised his sister to keep the matter secret, upon the ground of Ammon being their brother; but he only smothered his resentment, and waited for an opportunity to avenge himself; taking care, in the mean time, to avoid all communication with the offender.

When David heard of the melancholy occurrence, he was very wroth; but it is not said that he adopted any measures for the punishment of Ammon: if he had, he might have prevented the catastrophe which ensued.†

At the expiration of two years, Absalom invited all his brethren to a sheep-shearing at Baalhazor, and with some difficulty prevailed upon David to let Ammon go amongst the rest. According to a previous command, Ammon was assassinated, whilst merry with wine, by the servants of Absalom, who immediately fled to Talmai,‡ the son of Ammihud, King of Geshur, with whom he resided three years.§

David at first mourned bitterly for the loss of Ammon;

* 2 Sam. iii. 2.

† In proof of this suggestion, the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and Josephus, have the following addition to the text—"But he would not grieve the soul of Ammon his son, for he loved him, because he was his first born." Ad. Clarke.

‡ He was his grandfather. 2 Sam. iii. 3. § 2 Sam. xiii. 3.

but, as that grief wore off, his heart softened towards Absalom, which was soon perceived by Joab.

By the means of an ingenious device, Joab induced David to allow Absalom to return in privacy to his own house; but would not see him himself. This youthful prince was remarkable for beauty of person, and particularly for a profusion of fine hair. Becoming impatient of living in retirement, he sent for Joab, and prevailed upon him to reconcile him unto his father David; and when Absalom bowed himself on his face to the ground, the king kissed him, and a reconciliation, which was no doubt sincere on the part of David, apparently took place.*

David, however, had yet to experience a still greater trial; for this favourite son, as he really was, soon afterwards engaged in a scheme of rebellion against his father's throne and person, which was but too successful. Having assumed an appearance of state, he basely insinuated that his father neglected to administer judgment to his subjects, and lamented that he was himself deprived of the power of doing so. By an affected condescension, he won upon the affections of the people, so that he stole the hearts of the men of Israel.†

As soon‡ as he imagined he had secured the affections of the populace, he obtained leave from David to go to Hebron, the place of his birth, under the hypocritical pretence of paying a vow he had made whilst at Geshur, that if Jehovah would bring him again to Jerusalem, then he would serve Jehovah.

According to a previously concerted plan, as soon as Absalom had arrived in Hebron, he was proclaimed king; and one of the chief conspirators was Ahithophel, the Gilonite. That this conspiracy was of wide and alarming extent, we

* 2 Sam. xiii. xiv. † 2 Sam. xv. 1. 6.

‡ That is forty years after. 2 Sam xv. 7. 9.

may collect from the immediate determination of David to abandon Jerusalem, refusing even to take the ark along with him. Taking with him his household, the Cherethites, the Pelethites, and the Gittites, and accompanied by Ittai, the Gittite, who refused to quit his sovereign, David took his way over the brook Kidron, toward the wilderness, all the country weeping with a loud voice, as the people passed over.

David ordered Zadok, the priest, to remain with the ark in Jerusalem, and keep his son Ahimaaz, and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, with him; purposing to stay in the plain until he received information from them. And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.*

On the top of the mount, and whilst performing an act of solemn worship to God, Hushai, the Archite, came to meet him, with his coat rent, and earth upon his head; but David

Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial. Jehovah hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and Jehovah hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom, thy son: and behold thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man.* Abishai would have instantly slain him, but David forbid him, saying, let him curse, because Jehovah hath said unto him, curse David; who shall then say, wherefore hast thou done so? Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it: let him alone, and let him curse; for Jehovah hath bidden him. It may be that Jehovah will look on mine affliction, and that Jehovah will requite me good for his cursing this day.†

In the mean time, Absalom, with Ahithophel and all the men of Israel, entered into Jerusalem; and Hushai was received into the young prince's counsel. David had left behind him ten of his concubines to take care of the royal palace; and upon Absalom's demanding advice what course he should pursue, in order to secure himself in the throne, Ahithophel advised that he should connect himself with his father's concubines, in order that all Israel might hear that he was abhorred of his father; so that the hands of all that were with Absalom might be strong: thus giving full evidence that the prayers of David‡ had been heard.

The unhappy youth followed this profligate advice, and that the scandal might be the greater, a tent was spread on

The badges of his grief and patience;
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steeled
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted;
And barbarism itself have pitied him.

RICHARD II.—YORK.

* Sam. xvi. 8. † 2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12.

‡ 2 Sam. xv. 31.

the top of the house, and the abominable act committed in the sight of all Israel; and thus was fulfilled, in a remarkable manner, the judgment of God in the matter of Uriah, as pronounced by Nathan, the prophet.*

Ahithophel having demanded of Absalom 12,000 men, in order to pursue David whilst he and his men were weary and weak handed, the prince consulted Hushai, who gave opposite advice; recommending him first to strengthen himself in the throne, and collect an army sufficient to overpower all resistance, alleging that David and his companions were men of valour, and, if made desperate, were not likely to yield to an inferior force.

Absalom yielded to the advice of Hushai, whose only object was delay, that he might have time to apprize David of the prince's proceedings. He immediately, therefore, despatched Jonathan and Ahimaaz, who were concealed at Enrogel, to David, saying, lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that are with him.†

When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, and probably forming a right conclusion as to the probable result, he saddled his ass, and returned to his house and city, and, putting his household in order, deliberately hanged himself.

The departure of Jonathan and Ahimaaz having been reported to Absalom, he sent messengers to apprehend them; but being concealed in a well by a woman of Bahurim, they evaded their pursuers, and arrived safely where David sojourned, who immediately arose, and all the people that were with him, and passed over Jordan, and came to Mahanaim.‡

* 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12. On David's return he committed these women to close confinement, to the day of their deaths, and had no further communication with them. 2 Sam. xx. 3.

† 2 Sam. xvii. 16. ‡ 2 Sam. xvii. 24

Whilst waiting in this place, Shobi, an Ammonite, Machir, the son of Ammiel, of Lodebar, and Barzillai, the Gileadite, brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, the people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.*

Absalom having made Amasa, the son of Ithra, an Israelite, captain of his host, pitched with all Israel in the land of Gilead. And David having numbered the people that were with him, and set officers over hundreds and thousands, placed a third of his force under the command of Joab, another third under that of Abishai, and the remaining third under that of Ittai, the Gittite, proposing to command the whole in person; but the people answered, thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore, now, it is better that thou succour us out of the city.†

The king having yielded to their affectionate remonstrance, performed his last duty of reviewing the troops as they passed through the gate; and confident in the fidelity and bravery of his army, and in the skill of his officers, he was, probably, much less anxious about the success of the battle, than the safety of his guilty, but still dearly beloved child; for the last orders of this tender-hearted parent, to his commanders, were "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom."‡

The battle took place in the wood of Ephraim, and, as David most likely foresaw, terminated in the defeat of Absa-

* 2 Sam. xvii. 27—29. † 2 Sam. xviii. 3.
‡ 2 Sam. xviii. 5.

lom, with the loss of 20,000 men. In his flight Absalom was caught by the hair of his head, by the boughs of an oak, and his mule galloping from under him, he was left suspended in the air. Information being brought to Joab, he reproved the messenger for not killing him; but he replied, though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, beware that none touch the young man Absalom. Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me.* Joab then took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. Absalom, in his life, had erected a pillar in the king's dale, having no son to keep his name in remembrance; and it is called unto this day Absalom's place.†

When the news came to David that Absalom was slain, he was much moved, and went up to his chamber to weep, exclaiming, O my son Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom; would to God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!‡ Upon Joab's return, he remonstrated with the monarch for exhibiting such excessive grief, and pointed out to him, in no very respectful terms, how probable it was that the troops would take offence at his thus slighting them after so important a service; declaring, "I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befel thee from thy youth until now. Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the

* 2 Sam. xviii. 12, 13. † 1 Sam. xviii. 18.
‡ 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent."*

Whilst the men of Israel were hesitating whether they should send to David, and invite him to return and resume the throne, the monarch sent privately to the elders of Judah, his own tribe, saying, why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house. Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king? And say ye to Amasa, art not thou of my bone, and of my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually, in the room of Joab. And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man: so that they sent this word unto the king, return thou, and all thy servants. So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.†

Shimei, the Benjamite, who had so grievously insulted the king during his flight, was amongst the first to hail his return, and appease his wrath by submission, and by the artifice of being the first of the house of Joseph who came to meet him. When Abishai would have put him to death for having cursed the anointed of Jehovah, David sharply rebuked him, declaring that no man should be put to death that day in Israel.‡

If treason and rebellion were not productive of so much misery and bloodshed, it might be well that they should occur now and then, in order that kings might be able to discover who were their real friends. Shimei had shewed himself a traitor; but Barzillai and many others had had the opportunity of exhibiting their unshaken attachment. So also the true character of Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth,

* 2 Sam. xix. 7, 8. † 2 Sam. xix. 11—15. ‡ 2 Sam. xix. 22.

was brought to light by the late rebellion; although his unprincipled treachery appears to have met with a very different result than it merited. For during David's flight, Ziba had joined himself to the king, with a couple of asses saddled, 200 loaves, 100 bunches of raisins, 100 of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine, alleging that his master, Mephibosheth, had staid behind in Jerusalem, with the expectation that the house of Israel would that day restore him the kingdom of his father. David gave credence to this calumny too readily, and gave to Ziba all that had pertained unto Mephibosheth.* Now, however, this grateful and affectionate prince, who, through real grief of heart, had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day of David's departure, until he came again in peace; was amongst the first to hail his return, and when David reproachfully asked him, wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth? replied, my lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king: because thy servant is lame. And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes. For all of my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right, therefore, have I yet to cry any more unto the king? And the king said unto him, why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, thou and Ziba divide the land. And Mephibosheth said unto the king, yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.†

Barzillai having accompanied David over Jordan, on his triumphant return, the monarch was anxious to shew his

* 2 Sam. xvi. 1—4. † 2 Sam. xix. 24—30.

gratitude to him for his kindness in the hour of adversity, and invited him to spend the remainder of his days at Jerusalem; but this the worthy Gileadite declined on account of his extreme age, recommending, however, his son, Chimham, to the royal protection and favour.*

A useful lesson is afforded, by Absalom's rebellion, of the great unsteadiness of popular favour. A short time before, both Judah and Israel were shouting, God save King Absalom, and united to drive his aged father into exile: now both divisions of the nation are disposed to quarrel, and almost fight each other, through jealousy who should have most credit for bringing him back again.†

> "With every minute they do change their mind,
> And call him noble, that was now their hate;
> Him vile, that was their garland."‡

Indeed, so violent was the animosity, that out of it a fresh rebellion was excited by Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite, who blew a trumpet, and cried, "We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse; every man to his tents, O Israel! So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba, the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan, even unto Jerusalem."§

David at first instructed Amasa to put down this new insurrection; but that officer not collecting his troops together with sufficient expedition, and the monarch becoming apprehensive that this might prove a more serious affair than that of Absalom, ordered Abishai to follow after Sheba with all possible expedition, lest he should obtain and shelter himself in some of the fortified cities. With Abishai went Joab's

* 2 Sam. xix. 31—40. † 2 Sam. xix. 41—43.
‡ Coriol. § 2 Sam. xx. 1, 2.

men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and as they went out of Jerusalem they were joined by Amasa and his troops. Joab, who although deprived of his command had accompanied his brother, assassinated Amasa, under pretence of kissing him; and immediately assuming the command, with his brother Abishai, pursued after Sheba, through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel, of Beth-maachah, in which city he took refuge, and Joab immediately prepared to besiege it.

By the advice and interference of a prudent woman, an inhabitant of the city, the rebel was apprehended, and his head thrown over the wall, and thus the rebellion was extinguished; and Joab and his army returned home to Jerusalem, to the king;* who appears to have allowed Joab to resume his post of commander-in-chief, for it is said Joab was over all the host of Israel.†

No sooner had David quelled these two formidable rebellions, but the whole land was afflicted, for the space of three years, by a famine; and when David enquired of Jehovah why he had thus afflicted them, he was answered that it was for Saul and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites, whom the children of Israel had sworn unto.‡ David having enquired of the Gibeonites what atonement they required, they demanded that seven of Saul's sons or descendants should be given up to them; and David accordingly gave two of Saul's sons by Rizpah, and five of his grandsons, the children of Michal by Adriel, to the Gibeonites, who hanged them in Gibeah of Saul.

Having thus satisfied the justice of the case, and the unhappy Rizpah watching them day and night, in order to protect them from the birds and beasts of prey, David took them down; and having obtained from the men of Jabesh

* 2 Sam. xx. 22. † 2 Sam. xx. 23. ‡ Josh. ix. 3. 16, 17.

Gilead the bones of Saul and Jonathan, he buried the whole in the country of Benjamin, in Zelah, in the Sepulchre of Kish.*

The following beautiful hymn is here introduced by the author of the Books of Samuel, as sung by David in the day that Jehovah had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul; and which is in substance the same as the 18th Psalm.†

"Jehovah is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, the God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence. I will call on Jehovah, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; the sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; in my distress I called upon Jehovah, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also and came down; and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind. And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled. Jehovah

* 2 Sam. xxi. 12—14.

† When Jehovah delivered, that is, every time of any great deliverance, David gave thanks in these or the like words; they were the substance of his daily devotions, and at last formed into a hymn for public use, entitled, To the chief musician. The variations from this in Psalm xviii. are, by the Jewish Commentator, Abarbinel, reckoned to be 74. PATRICK.

thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered his voice, and he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them. And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of Jehovah, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils. He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters; he delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but Jehovah was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me. Jehovah rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of Jehovah, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me: and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them. I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore Jehovah hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eyesight. With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright. With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury. And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down. For thou art my lamp, O Jehovah; and Jehovah will lighten my darkness. For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall. As for God his way is perfect; the word of Jehovah is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him. For who is God, save Jehovah? and who is a rock, save our God? God is my strength and power, and he maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hind's feet: and setteth me upon my high places. He teacheth my hands to war: so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms. Thou hast also given me

the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip. I have pursued mine enemies and destroyed them; and turned not again till I had consumed them. And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet. For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me. Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me. They looked, but there was none to save; even unto Jehovah, but he answered them not. Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth, I did stamp them as the mire of the street, and did spread them abroad. Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people, thou hast kept me to be head of the heathen: a people which I knew not shall serve me. Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear they shall be obedient unto me. Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid out of their close places. Jehovah liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation. It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me. And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name. He is the tower of salvation for his king, and sheweth mercy to his anointed; unto David, and to his seed for evermore."*

Under the influence of undue self satisfaction, and at the instigation of the great adversary of the human race, who is continually going about seeking whom he may devour,† David was induced to ascertain the number of his subjects,

* 2 Sam. xxii. 2—51. † 1 Peter, v. 8.

in which it is admitted the real strength and power of a monarch consists. Joab and the captains of the host were sensible of the impropriety of this measure, although the king himself could not perceive it, and they remonstrated with him in terms which ought to have induced him to hesitate. David, however, remained inflexible, and Joab and his captains reluctantly set about their task, which occupied them nine months and twenty days, and at last left off without counting the tribes of Levi and Benjamin: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.*

It does not appear very distinctly whether David's own conscience had smitten him, before he received the message of Jehovah from the prophet Gad;† but, as soon as the holy seer proposed to him the triple alternative of three years famine, three months flight before a pursuing enemy, or three days pestilence, he became fully sensible of his iniquity, and, in the bitterness of his heart, cried out, "I am in a great strait;" but, as it were, immediately remembering the mercies he had so often experienced at the hand of Jehovah, he hesitated not a moment in making his election, but said with becoming resignation, "Let me fall now into the hand of Jehovah, for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man."‡

God, however, had determined to punish both David for his presumption, and the people for their sins, probably their late repeated rebellions; and, therefore, sent forth his destroying angel, who stayed not till, in differents parts of the devoted land, 70,000 men were slain. When, however, this minister of the wrath of God approached Jerusalem, and stretched out his hand to destroy the city, Jehovah repented him of the evil, and said, It is enough, stay now thine hand.

* 1 Chron. xxi. 1—6. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1—9.
† 2 Sam. xxiv. 10, 11. 1 Chron. xxi. 7, 8.
‡ 2 Sam. xxiv 14. 1 Chron. xxi. 13.

Thus was exemplified the declaration of the psalmist, perhaps upon this very occasion, Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.* And thus too was prefigured that tender feeling and compassion which our blessed Saviour himself exhibited towards this long spared but devoted city, when he exclaimed, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"†

It was at the threshing floor of Araunah,‡ the Jebusite, that this awful spectacle took place; and if David was already smitten to the heart for the great offence he had given to God, how deeply must he have been affected, when he saw the angel of Jehovah stand between the earth and the heavens, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem? Then it was that David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed with sackcloth, fell on their faces; and David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, O Jehovah, my God, be on me and on my father's house, but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.§ By the command of God, David purchased the threshing floor of Araunah, at the full price,‖ who, however, would willingly have given it as a

* Ps. lxxxvii. 2. † Matth. xxiii. 37. Luke, xiii. 34.

‡ Called Arnan in Chronicles, but it is evidently the same name: the author of the Book of Chronicles omitting the emphatic article, and pointing the other letters differently. But the English translation massacres both names in the original, according to which that in the Book of Samuel should be Arnayah, and that in the Book of Chroqicles, Arnan.

§ 1 Chron. xxi. 17. ‖ 1 Chron. xxi. 22. 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.

present. And when David saw that Jehovah had answered him at the threshing floor of Araunah, then he sacrificed there, and built there an altar unto Jehovah,* and offered burnt offerings, and peace offerings, and called upon Jehovah; who answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering; and Jehovah commanded the angel, and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof; so Jehovah was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.†

This visible manifestation of the power and presence of God, no doubt determined David to fix upon this very spot, for the erection of the temple he was so desirous should be built for the worship of God; for he said, this is the house of Jehovah, God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.‡ In furtherance of this design, the monarch collected a vast quantity of costly materials for the erection of the future structure, and prepared abundantly for it before his death;§ and then called for Solomon, his son, and charged him to build an house for Jehovah, God of Israel. And David said to Solomon, "My son, as for me, it was in my

Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever. Now, my son, Jehovah be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of Jehovah, thy God, as he hath said of thee. Only Jehovah give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of Jehovah, thy God. Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and the judgments which Jehovah charged Moses with, concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not nor be dismayed. Now, behold in my trouble I have prepared for the house of Jehovah, an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight, for it is in abundance; timber also, and stone have I prepared, and thou mayest add thereto. Moreover, there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workmen of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work. Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron there is no number. Arise, therefore, and be doing, and Jehovah be with thee. David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon, his son, saying, Is not Jehovah, your God, with you? and hath he not given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before Jehovah, and before his people. Now set your heart and your soul to seek Jehovah, your God; arise, therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of Jehovah, God, to bring the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of Jehovah."*

David, however, was still destined to experience another

* 1 Chror. xxii. 7—19.

trial of his faith and patience; for his son Adonijah, the brother of Absalom, made an attempt to secure the throne for himself, and disappoint the intention of David, as to Solomon. Having associated to himself Joab, and Abiathar the priest, he made a great feast at Zoheleth, which is by Enrogel, and endeavoured to draw a strong party to him there. But Nathan and Bathsheba having warned David of Adonijah's project, the aged monarch immediately assembled his officers, and caused Solomon to ride on his own mule, and to be proclaimed king. Zadok, the priest, also took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed the young prince: and all the people blew a trumpet, and said, God save King Solomon!*

When Adonijah heard what David had done, he and his guests became alarmed, and separated, and went every man his way: as for Adonijah, he fled for refuge to the horns of the altar, lest his brother, Solomon, should slay him; but Solomon sent for him, and, upon his submitting himself to his authority, dismissed him, and sent him to his own house.†

One of the last acts of David's life, and evidently in the prospect of death, was the regulation and appointment of the priests in their courses, and the various other officers of the intended temple.‡

Preparing for his immediate dissolution, the aged monarch assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem. Then David, the king, stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: as for me,

* 1 Kings, i. 39. † 1 Kings, i. 53. ‡ 1 Chron. xxiii—xxviii.

I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building: but God said unto me, thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood. Howbeit, Jehovah, God of Israel, chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father, he liked me to make me king over all Israel: and of all my sons, (for Jehovah hath given me many sons) he hath chosen Solomon, my son, to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah, over Israel. And he said unto me, Solomon, thy son, he shall build my house, and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. Moreover, I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments, and my judgments, as at this day. Now, therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of Jehovah, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of Jehovah, your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever. And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for Jehovah searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. Take heed now, for Jehovah hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.*

After giving to Solomon a minute model or description of what the future temple should be,† he declared that Jehovah had made him understand in writing by his hand upon him,

* 1 Chron. xxviii. 1—10. † 1 Chron. xxviii. 11—18.

even all the works of this pattern; and said to Solomon, be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for Jehovah, God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of Jehovah. And, behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites, even they shall be with thee for all the service of the house of God: and there shall be with thee, for all manner of workmanship, every willing skilful man, for any manner of service: also the princes and all the people will be wholly at thy commandment.*

Then addressing the congregation he said, Solomon, my son, whom God alone hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great; for the palace is not for man, but for Jehovah, God. Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God; the gold, for things to be made of gold; and the silver, for things of silver; and the brass, for things of brass; the iron, for things of iron; and wood, for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours; and all manner of precious stones; and marble stones† in abundance. Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have, of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house. Even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver,‡ to overlay the walls of the houses withal: the gold, for things of gold; and the silver for things of silver; and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who

* 1 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21.

† Josephus says the temple was built of large blocks of white marble, beautifully polished, so as to produce a most splendid appearance.—Vol. iv. 141.

‡ £.13,500,000 in gold, £.2,625,000 in silver. Br. Wilson.

then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto Jehovah? Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly; and gave for the service of the house of God, of gold, five thousand talents and ten thousand drams; and of silver ten thousand talents;* and of brass, eighteen thousand talents; and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they with whom precious stones were found, gave them to the treasure of the house of Jehovah, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to Jehovah; and David, the king, also rejoiced with great joy.

Wherefore, David blessed Jehovah before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, Jehovah, God of Israel, our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Jehovah, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now, therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. O Jehovah, our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house, for thine holy name, cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own. I know also, my

* £.22,500,000 in gold, and £.3,750,000 in silver. Bp. Wilson.

God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart, I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee. O Jehovah, God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee: and give unto Solomon, my son, a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the palace, for which I have made provision.

And David said to all the congregation, now bless Jehovah, your God. And all the congregation blessed Jehovah, God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped Jehovah, and the king. And they sacrificed sacrifices unto Jehovah, and offered burnt offerings unto Jehovah, on the morrow after that day, even a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel: and did eat and drink

their way, to walk before me in truth, with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel. Moreover, thou knowest also what Joab, the son of Zeruiah, did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the host of Israel: unto Abner, the son of Ner, and unto Amasa, the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace; and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do, therefore, according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace. But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzillai, the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table; for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom, thy brother. And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim; but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by Jehovah, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now, therefore, hold him not guiltless; for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.*

The last words of this aged servant of God are supposed to be the following: David, the son of Jesse, said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel said; The spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springeth out of the earth

* 1 Kings, ii. 2—9. Dr. Kennicott thinks the Hebrew negative, *lo*, should be introduced here, from whom A. Clarke and Burder, O. C. 373. have made copious extracts.

by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns, thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.*

And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.†

So David died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour; and slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.‡

The following character of this monarch is given by the learned Dr. Anselm Bayly; "View him a youth feeding his father's sheep, patient of his brethren's insults, and not fearing the Philistine; view him a man steady in friendship, brave in perils, and faithful under all the persecutions of Saul; see

regardful of his people, sitting in the gate and attentive to their grievances; but especially behold him walking humbly, penitently, and devoutly with his God, an example to all. If poetry be thy taste and delight, thou canst not but admire David in his psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, when he teacheth thee to weep for Saul and Jonathan; to discern the spirit of the law, (Ps. l. li. cxix.); to adore thy maker in his works of creation, (Ps. cxxxix. civ.); and to praise and love him for his mercies of preservation and redemption, (Ps. ciii. and xvi)."*

SOLOMON.

A.C. 1015. THIS monarch began his reign with the brightest prospects, and the fairest promise: the approbation and appointment of his venerable parent, the good-will of his subjects, and, what was infinitely of more importance, the especial favour and providence of God.

Solomon was hardly seated on his throne, when his brother Adonijah, although so lately pardoned, discovered symptoms of a disposition to dispute the sovereignty. At least, that is the construction put by commentators upon his application to be permitted to marry Abishag, the Shunamite. He prevailed on Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, to prefer this request, which, however, produced an immediate sentence of death from the incensed monarch, and which was as immediately executed by Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada.†

That there was some conspiracy connected with this appli-

* Old Testament in Hebrew and English, at the end of the Second Book of Samuel.

† 1 Kings, ii. 13—25.

cation is clear; for Joab, the old commander-in-chief, had turned after Adonijah, although he turned not after Absalom,* and fled for sanctuary to the horns of the altar, whereeven he was slain by the express command of Solomon. This we may remember was one of the last commands of David, and to which Solomon in passing judgment, distinctly alluded, "Fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father. And Jehovah shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father, David, not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner, the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa, the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed, for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from Jehovah." †

Shimei also soon after received the same sentence, for Solomon having prescribed him a sort of honourable imprison-

him in a dream by night, and said, ask what I shall give thee. To which the monarch replied, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David, my father, great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Jehovah, my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David, my father; and I am but a little child, I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people, which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give, therefore, thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased Jehovah, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee; neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour; so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days. And Solomon awoke, and behold it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.*

* 1 Kings, iii. 5—15. 2 Chron. i. 7—12.

It is not easy to arrange or preserve a correct chronology of the transactions related concerning Solomon, in the First Book of Kings and the Second Book of Chronicles; and it will therefore be most convenient to relate them merely as facts which took place during that monarch's reign, the great and principal feature of which was the erection and dedication of the first temple.

For this purpose his father, David, had collected immense materials; to which Solomon added others, and was much assisted by Hiram, king of Tyre, who sent him both artificers and materials,* sending the cedars of Mount Lebanon in floats to Joppa, from whence Solomon conveyed them by land to Jerusalem.

This great work was began in the month of April,† in the 480th year after the Exodus,‡ and was completed in the month of October§, seven years afterwards. The spot selected for this object was in Mount Moriah, so long distinguished for the exhibition of the faith of Abraham,‖ and was the actual threshing floor lately purchased of Araunah,¶ and visited by the especial presence of God.**

Having completed the temple, the monarch was next careful to place therein its most important embellishments, even the ark of the covenant, which David had brought up from Kirjathjearim, and placed in a tent at Jerusalem.†† For

* 1 Kings, v. 2 Chron. ii.

† Which corresponds to the Hebrew month Zif.

‡ 1 Kings, vi. 1.

§ Which answers to the Hebrew month Bul.

‖ Gen. xxii. ¶ 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. 23.

** The particulars, proportion, and splendid decorations of this magnificent erection are minutely related in 1 Kings, vi. vii. and 2 Chron. iii. iv. And see a minute history of the temple from its erection to its final destruction, extracted from Calmet and Josephus, by A. Clarke, apud finem, 2 Kings, vi.

†† 2 Chron. i. 4.

this solemn purpose, Solomon assembled the elders and fathers of Israel, at the feast in the seventh month of Ethanim, when the priests took up the ark, and brought it, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, unto his place into the oracle* of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims, who spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark. There was nothing in the ark, save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when Jehovah made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt. And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud† filled the house of Jehovah :‡ so that the priests could not stand§ to minister by reason of the cloud ; for the glory of Jehovah had filled the house of God.

Then it was that Solomon pronounced that beautiful prayer on the dedication of the temple, which has ever been considered as a standard of beauty, eloquence, and piety. "Jehovah said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever. And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood. And he said, blessed be Jehovah, God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David, my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying, since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house,

* 1 Kings, vi. 16. 2 Chron. iv. 20.

† Or Shechinah; and which Dr. Jamieson considers a type of the incarnation. Use of Sacred History: Vol. ii. 328.

‡ 1 Kings, viii. 1—12. 2 Chron. v. 2—14.

§ What a proof of the being of God, and of the Divine Presence! What must those holy men have felt at that time? A. Clarke. See Exod. xl. 34, 35.

that my name might be therein; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel; but I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel. And it was in the heart of David, my father, to build an house for the name of Jehovah, God of Israel. And Jehovah said unto David, my father, whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. Nevertheless, thou shalt not build the house; but thy son, that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name. And Jehovah hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David, my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as Jehovah promised, and have built an house for the name of Jehovah, God of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of Jehovah, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

And Solomon stood before the altar of Jehovah, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: and he said, O Jehovah, God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants, that walk before thee with all their heart: who hast kept with thy servant David, my father, that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. Therefore now, Jehovah, God of Israel, keep with thy servant David, my father, that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel, so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me. And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David, my father. But will God, indeed, dwell on the earth? behold,

the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: how much less this house that I have builded? Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Jehovah, my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day: that thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, my name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place. And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place; and when thou hearest, forgive.

If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.

When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee: if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people, for an inheritance.

If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blas-

ting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness, there be; what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house: then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) that they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

Moreover, concerning a stranger,* that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray towards this house; hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the

themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying; We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; and so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: for they be thy people and thy inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: that thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee. For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses, thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Jehovah, God.

And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto Jehovah, he arose from before the altar of Jehovah, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. And he stood and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be Jehovah, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised; there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses, his servant. Jehovah, our God, be with us, as he was with our fathers; let him not

leave us, nor forsake us; that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers. And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before Jehovah, be nigh unto Jehovah, our God, day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel, at all times, as the matter shall require; that all the people of the earth may know that Jehovah is God, and that there is none else. Let your heart, therefore, be perfect with Jehovah, our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.*

And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before Jehovah. And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto Jehovah, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king, and all the children of Israel, dedicated the house of Jehovah.†

Now, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of Jehovah, because the glory of Jehovah had filled the house of Jehovah. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of Jehovah upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised Jehovah, saying, For he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.‡

At the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt.§ And in the

* 1 Kings, viii. 12—61. 2 Chron. vi. 1—42.

† 1 Kings, viii. 63. 2 Chron. vii. 5. ‡ 2 Chron. vii. 1—3.

§ Supposed to be from Antioch of Syria, to the Rhinocorura; the former being on the *north*, the latter on the *south*; i. e. from one extremity of the land to the other. A. Clarke.

eighth day they made a solemn assembly; for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days. And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month the king sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart, for the goodness that Jehovah had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.*

Besides this magnificent temple, Solomon erected a palace for himself, of great splendour,† and the house of the forest of Lebanon, and a smaller palace for his queen, the daughter of Pharaoh; who, as a gentile, he did not think it right should dwell in the house of David, king of Israel, whereunto the ark of Jehovah had come;‡ and these latter erections, it is said, occupied a space of thirteen years.§

And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of Jehovah, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do, that Jehovah appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And Jehovah said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me; I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee; and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments, then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David, thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes, which I have set

* 2 Chron. vii. 8—10.

† See the description of this building in 1 Kings, vii. 1—12.

‡ 2 Chron. viii. 11. 1 Kings, ix. 24.

§ 1 Kings, vii. 1.

before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them; then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all people;* and at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath Jehovah done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook Jehovah, their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them; therefore hath Jehovah brought upon them all this evil.†

Besides the cedar wood and artificers with which Hiram had supplied Solomon for these important erections, he also sent him six score talents of gold,‡ and four hundred and fifty talents of gold from Ophir;§ and Solomon in return, over and beyond the corn, wine, and oil, which he had contracted to pay his servants,‖ gave him also twenty cities in the land of Galilee; with which, however, he does not appear to have been satisfied, for he called them Cabul.¶

This highly favoured monarch also built Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hagor, and Megiddo, and Gezer,

* How is it possible that an infidel can resist the effect of the exact fulfilment of this and similar prophecies, in every Jew he sees or hears of, from the richest to the poorest amongst them?

† 1 Kings, ix. 1—9. 2 Chron. vii. 11—22.

‡ 1 Kings, ix. 14.

§ 1 Kings, ix. 28. 2 Chron. ix. 10.

‖ 2 Chron. ii. 10. 1 Kings, v. 11.

¶ 1 Kings, ix. 11—13. 2 Chron. viii. 2. The word Cabul signifies displeasing or dirty. They seem to have been small towns in the vicinity of Tyre, beyond the boundaries of the land, as divided by Joshua, and lately taken from the ancient inhabitants. Scott, in 1 Kings, ix.

which Pharaoh, king of Egypt, having taken and burnt, and slain the Canaanites who dwelt there, gave for a present to his daughter. He also went to Hamathzobah, and prevailed against it, and built Bethhoron the upper, and Bethhoron the nether, Baalath, and Tadmor* in the wilder-

* Tadmor in the wilderness; afterwards the city and powerful state of Palmyra, whose splendid ruins still constitute one of the grandest monuments of the remains of antiquity, and one of the most interesting spectacles to travellers. "To the west, about midway between Orouros and Emesa, in the vast desert which connects Syria with Arabia, is Palmyra, or Tadamora, the city of palm trees. It was a most powerful city under its celebrated queen, Zenobia, the wife of Odenatus. She opposed the Emperor Aurelian, in the plains of Syria, at the head of 700,000 men, and had nearly defeated him, but was overthrown and carried captive to Italy, A. D. 273, where she had large possessions assigned to her near the Tiber. She was no less an accomplished than a brave princess, and had for her secretary the celebrated Longinus, the reputed author of the well-known treatise on the sublime." Butler's Geography, 203. See more particular accounts of Palmyra, &c. in the following works: Ancient Universal History, vol. i. 367. Guthrie's General History, vol. i. 167. Prideaux, vol. iv. 590. Gibbon, chap. xi. Buckingham's Travels among the Arab Tribes, 428. Volney's Travels in Syria and Egypt, vol. ii. chap. 20. The most minute account is given by Dawkins, Wood, and Bouverie, from whom the above writers have largely borrowed; and by Dr. Halley, in the Philosophical Transactions; but the most interesting statements may be seen in Wells's Scripture Geography, vol. ii. 61—79. C. T. Middleton's Geography, vol. i. 87—90. Folio. London, 1778. And Crevier's Lives of the Roman Emperors, vol. ix. 147—175. See also Seller's Antiq. of Palm. London, 1696. And Quarterly Journal of Education, No. iii. p. 134.

The valley of salt, where David got him a name by smiting the Syrians, is about four miles from this city. 2 Sam. viii. 13. Harmer, amongst a variety of interesting remarks, has the following: "To those who feel something of an incredulous anxiety, about the accounts which the sacred writers have given us, of the extent of the kingdom, and of the fame of Israel in the days of David and

ness, and cities of store in Hamath, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars; for all which purposes he raised a levy of 30,000 men, besides 170,000 bearers of burdens, and hewers in the mountains.*

Jehovah had promised Solomon great wisdom† for government, and one instance, in particular, is recorded of his extraordinary discrimination: two women laid claim to the same child, and each persisting that it was her own offspring, the judicious monarch, by ordering the child to be cut asunder alive, and divided between them, ascertained, from the force of maternal feeling, the rightful claimant. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged, and they feared the king; for they saw that

Solomon, I would recommend the curious account which Wood (Ruins of Palmyra) has given of that state. Let them consider that it was a small territory in the midst of a desert, and yet extended its conquests over many rich countries and considerable states; that the great kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and of the Ptolomies became part of the dominions of a single city, whose name we in vain look for in history; and this, though it flourished in modern times, in comparison of the age of David; none of the dates found there (Palmyra) being earlier than Christ, and in times concerning which we have large accounts. That Palmyra and Balbec, which are perhaps the two most surprising remains of ancient magnificence now left, should be so neglected in history, as in a great measure to be left to tell their own story, appears a very remarkable fact, replete with more sorts of instruction than one. For, besides the moral lessons which Wood refers to, it removes at once all the imaginary difficulties derived from the supposed silence of profane history, concerning the kings and affairs of Jerusalem, a city which stood in the neighbourhood of Palmyra and Balbec, both of which are passed over in as great or greater silence; to which is to be added the consideration, that Jerusalem was much more ancient than either of them." Vol. iii. 367.

* 1 Kings, v. 13—15. 1 Kings, ix. 15—19. 2 Chron. viii. 2—6. ii. 18

† 1 Kings, iii. 12. 2 Chron. i. 12.

the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.* And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men: than Ethan, the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth up out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.†

At that early period, too, it may be considered no small indication of superior intelligence, that Solomon turned his attention to commercial pursuits; for he built a navy of ships in Eziongaber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom; and his servants traded to Ophir, with the servants of Hiram, king of Tyre, for gold,‡ almug trees, and precious stones.§ In one year he received 666 talents of gold, besides that he had of the merchantmen, and of the traffic of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country.‖ He had, also at sea a navy of Tarshish,¶ with the navy of Hiram, which, once in three years, brought him gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.**

* 1 Kings, iii. 16—28. † 1 Kings, iv. 29—34.

‡ 1 Kings, ix. 26—28. 2 Chron. viii. 17, 18. § 1 Kings, x. 11.

‖ 1 Kings, x. 14, 15. 2 Chron. ix. 13, 14.

¶ As to these places, see Bruce's Travels, vol. ii. 354. A. Clarke, apud finem, 1 Kings, x.

** 1 Kings, x. 22. 2 Chron. ix. 21.

In addition to wisdom, God had promised to Solomon, as a reward for his pious and judicious request, both riches and honour, and that promise he abundantly performed; for we are told that he reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life. And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallow deer, and fatted fowl. For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.* He had also 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen. And he had twelve officers over all Israel, who provided victual for him and his household: each man his month in a year made provision. Barley also and straw, for the horses and dromedaries, brought they unto the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge.† And Solomon made 200 targets of beaten gold: 600 shekels of gold went to one target. And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.‡ Moreover,

* 1 Kings, iv. 21—25. 2 Chron. ix. 26. 28.

† 1 Kings, iv. 21—28. 2 Chron. i. 15. 2 Chron. ix. 25.

‡ Some suppose that by the house of the forest of Lebanon, mentioned in 1 Kings, vii. 2. and x. 17—21, as built by Solomon, is intended Heliopolis, the city of the sun, or Baalbec, whose magnificent ruins, so long the admiration of travellers, are said to have been lately wholly swallowed up by an earthquake. Rae Wilson's Travels, vol. ii. 144—151.

the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the house was round behind: and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom. And all his drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.* So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches† and for wisdom. And he gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had 1,400 chariots, and 12,000 horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance. And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for 600 shekels of silver, and an horse for 150: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means.‡

So Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth, for riches, and for wisdom; and all the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.§

* 1 Kings, x. 16—21. 2 Chron. ix. 15—20.

† His annual income has been estimated at more than £142,240,000. A. Clarke. In whose commentary at the end of 2 Chron. ix. see a curious account of this monarch's ivory throne, &c.

‡ 1 Kings, x. 26—29. 2 Chron. i. 14.

§ 1 Kings, x. 23. 25. 2 Chron. ix. 23, 24.

Amongst other distinguished characters who were attracted by the fame of the Israelitish monarch, was the queen of Sheba, who came from the uttermost parts of the earth,* to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and brought with her a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and the holocausts, or burnt offerings† which he offered in the house of Jehovah, there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land, of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be Jehovah, thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because Jehovah loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king 120 talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as those which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which he gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.‡

* Matt. xii. 42. 1 Kings, x. 1. 2 Chron. ix. 1.

† A. Clarke, and Luther.

‡ 1 Kings, x. 1—13. 2 Chron. ix. 1—12.

And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees and precious stones. And the king made of the almug* trees, pillars for the house of Jehovah, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day.

Neither did this monarch neglect to regulate the public worship of God, for three times in a year he offered burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto Jehovah; and he burnt incense upon the altar that was before Jehovah.†

But, unhappily, with all his wisdom, Solomon was not able to preserve the integrity of his religious character amidst all this grandeur and magnificence; for at the close of his life, when it might have been expected he would have more especially devoted himself to the service and worship of God, he fell into gross debauchery and idolatry. He cohabited with no less than seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, strange women of the nations, concerning which Jehovah had said,‡ Ye shall not go in unto them, neither shall they come in unto you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. And so it proved to be the case, for his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with Jehovah, his God, as was the heart of David, his father; for with his Zidonian wives he went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians; with his Ammonitish wives he worshipped Milcom and Moloch, the abominations of the Ammonites; and to please his Moabitish wives, he built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab; and likewise he did for all his strange wives, who burnt incense,

* Or algum, 2 Chron. ix. 10, 11. Probably rosewood, or other coloured wood. A. Clarke. Thyine wood. Burder, O. L. 545.

† 1 Kings, ix. 25.

‡ Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3, 4.

and sacrificed unto their gods; and thus did evil in the sight of Jehovah; and went not fully after Jehovah, as did David, his father.*

The anger of Jehovah was, therefore, excited against this highly favoured servant, as well indeed it might, wherefore he said unto him, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom: but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake,† and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen;‡ thus, however, in judgment remembering mercy, and his loving kindness to David.

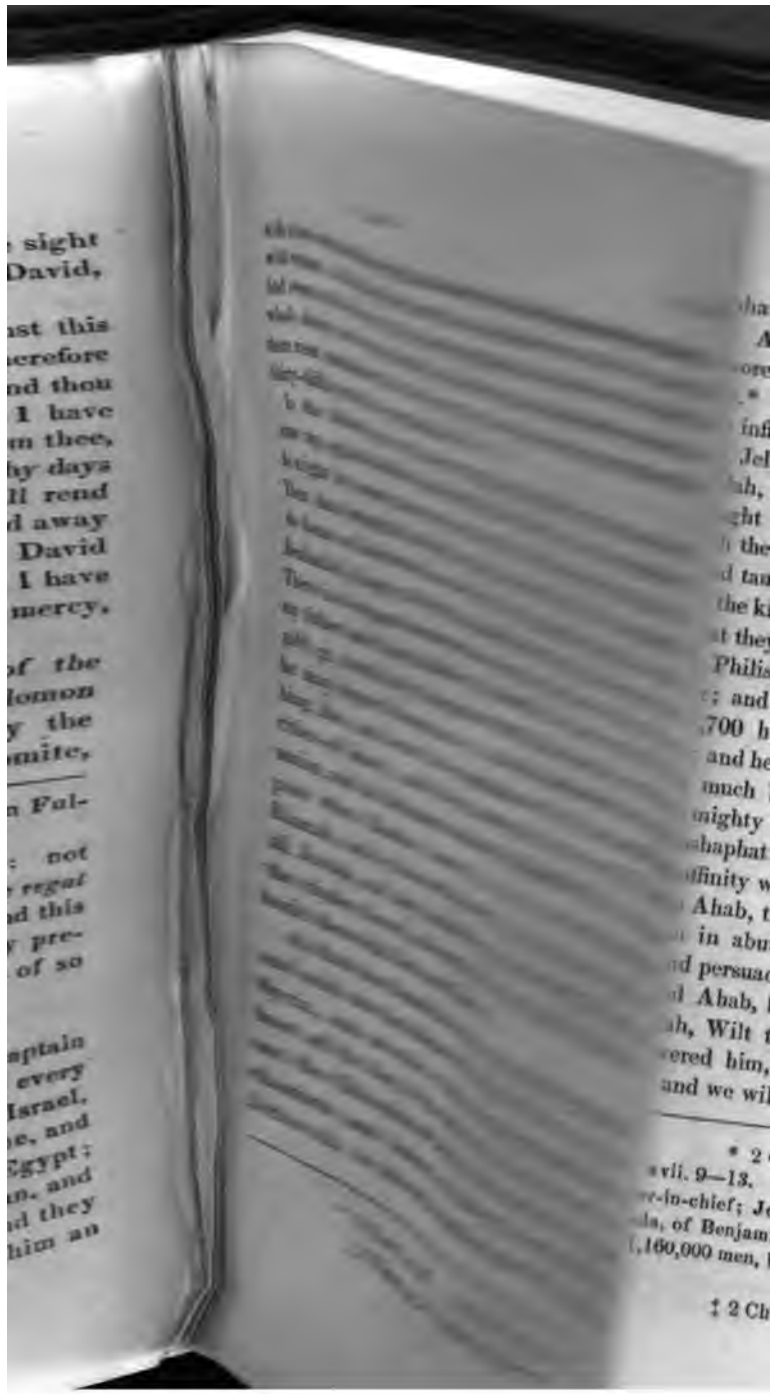
In execution of this solemn sentence, several of the neighbouring princes were allowed to harass Solomon during the remainder of his days, and to destroy the tranquillity of his latter end; viz: Hadad,§ the Edomite,

* 1 Kings, xi. 1—8. See a curious plate of all these idols, in Fuller's Pisgah Sight of Canaan, p. 123.

† The *prevailing* lion must come out of the tribe of Judah: not only the tribe must be preserved, but the *regal line*, and the *regal right*. All this must be done for the true David's sake: and this was undoubtedly what God had in view, by thus miraculously preserving the tribe of Judah, and the royal line, in the midst of so general a defection. A. Clarke.

‡ 1 Kings, xi. 11—13.

§ It came to pass when David was in Edom, and Joab, the captain of the host, was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom, (for six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, after he had cut off every male in Edom,) that Hadad fled, he, and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt: Hadad being yet a little child. And they arose out of Midian, and came to Paran; and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt; who gave him an



before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them; then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all people;* and at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath Jehovah done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook Jehovah, their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them; therefore hath Jehovah brought upon them all this evil.†

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¶ 1 Kings, ix. 11—13. 2 Chron. viii. 2. The word Cabul signifies displeasing or dirty. They seem to have been small towns in the vicinity of Tyre, beyond the boundaries of the land, as divided by Joshua, and lately taken from the ancient inhabitants. Scott, in 1 Kings, ix.

which Pharaoh, king of Egypt, having taken and burnt, and slain the Canaanites who dwelt there, gave for a present to his daughter. He also went to Hamathzobah, and prevailed against it, and built Bethhoron the upper, and Bethhoron the nether, Baalath, and Tadmor* in the wilder-

* Tadmor in the wilderness; afterwards the city and powerful state of Palmyra, whose splendid ruins still constitute one of the grandest monuments of the remains of antiquity, and one of the most interesting spectacles to travellers. "To the west, about midway between Orouros and Emesa, in the vast desert which connects Syria with Arabia, is Palmyra, or Tadamora, the city of palm trees. It was a most powerful city under its celebrated queen, Zenobia, the wife of Odenatus. She opposed the Emperor Aurelian, in the plains of Syria, at the head of 700,000 men, and had nearly defeated him, but was overthrown and carried captive to Italy, A. D. 273, where she had large possessions assigned to her near the Tiber. She was no less an accomplished than a brave princess, and had for her secretary the celebrated Longinus, the reputed author of the well-known treatise on the sublime." Butler's Geography, 203. See more particular accounts of Palmyra, &c. in the following works: Ancient Universal History, vol. i. 367. Guthrie's General History, vol. i. 167. Prideaux, vol. iv. 590. Gibbon, chap. xi. Buckingham's Travels among the Arab Tribes, 428. Volney's Travels in Syria and Egypt, vol. ii. chap. 20. The most minute account is given by Dawkins, Wood, and Bouverie, from whom the above writers have largely borrowed; and by Dr. Halley, in the Philosophical Transactions; but the most interesting statements may be seen in Wells's Scripture Geography, vol. ii. 61—79. C. T. Middleton's Geography, vol. i. 87—90. Folio. London, 1778. And Crevier's Lives of the Roman Emperors, vol. ix. 147—175. See also Seller's Antiq. of Palm. London, 1696. And Quarterly Journal of Education, No. iii. p. 134.

The valley of salt, where David got him a name by smiting the Syrians, is about four miles from this city. 2 Sam. viii. 13. Harmer, amongst a variety of interesting remarks, has the following: "To those who feel something of an incredulous anxiety, about the accounts which the sacred writers have given us, of the extent of the kingdom, and of the fame of Israel in the days of David and

ness, and cities of store in Hamath, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars; for all which purposes he raised a levy of 30,000 men, besides 170,000 bearers of burdens, and hewers in the mountains.*

Jehovah had promised Solomon great wisdom† for government, and one instance, in particular, is recorded of his extraordinary discrimination: two women laid claim to the same child, and each persisting that it was her own offspring, the judicious monarch, by ordering the child to be cut asunder alive, and divided between them, ascertained, from the force of maternal feeling, the rightful claimant. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged, and they feared the king; for they saw that

Solomon, I would recommend the curious account which Wood (Ruins of Palmyra) has given of that state. Let them consider that it was a small territory in the midst of a desert, and yet extended its conquests over many rich countries and considerable states; that the great kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and of the Ptolomies became part of the dominions of a single city, whose name we in vain look for in history; and this, though it flourished in modern times, in comparison of the age of David; none of the dates found there (Palmyra) being earlier than Christ, and in times concerning which we have large accounts. That Palmyra and Balbec, which are perhaps the two most surprising remains of ancient magnificence now left, should be so neglected in history, as in a great measure to be left to tell their own story, appears a very remarkable fact, replete with more sorts of instruction than one. For, besides the moral lessons which Wood refers to, it removes at once all the imaginary difficulties derived from the supposed silence of profane history, concerning the kings and affairs of Jerusalem, a city which stood in the neighbourhood of Palmyra and Balbec, both of which are passed over in as great or greater silence; to which is to be added the consideration, that Jerusalem was much more ancient than either of them." Vol. iii. 367.

* 1 Kings, v. 13—15. 1 Kings, ix. 15—19. 2 Chron. viii. 2—6. ii. 18

† 1 Kings, iii. 12. 2 Chron. i. 12.

the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.* And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men: than Ethan, the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth up out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.†

At that early period, too, it may be considered no small indication of superior intelligence, that Solomon turned his attention to commercial pursuits; for he built a navy of ships in Eziongaber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom; and his servants traded to Ophir, with the servants of Hiram, king of Tyre, for gold,‡ almug trees, and precious stones.§ In one year he received 666 talents of gold, besides that he had of the merchantmen, and of the traffic of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country.‖ He had, also at sea a navy of Tarshish,¶ with the navy of Hiram, which, once in three years, brought him gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.**

* 1 Kings, iii. 16—28. † 1 Kings, iv. 29—34.

‡ 1 Kings, ix. 26—28. 2 Chron. viii. 17, 18. § 1 Kings, x. 11.

‖ 1 Kings, x. 14, 15. 2 Chron. ix. 13, 14.

¶ As to these places, see Bruce's Travels, vol. ii. 354. A. Clarke, apud finem, 1 Kings, x.

** 1 Kings, x. 22. 2 Chron. ix. 21.

In addition to wisdom, God had promised to Solomon, as a reward for his pious and judicious request, both riches and honour, and that promise he abundantly performed; for we are told that he reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life. And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallow deer, and fatted fowl. For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.* He had also 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen. And he had twelve officers over all Israel, who provided victual for him and his household: each man his month in a year made provision. Barley also and straw, for the horses and dromedaries, brought they unto the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge.† And Solomon made 200 targets of beaten gold: 600 shekels of gold went to one target. And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.‡ Moreover,

* 1 Kings, iv. 21—25. 2 Chron. ix. 26. 28.

† 1 Kings, iv. 21—28. 2 Chron. i. 15. 2 Chron. ix. 25.

‡ Some suppose that by the house of the forest of Lebanon, mentioned in 1 Kings, vii. 2. and x. 17—21, as built by Solomon, is intended Heliopolis, the city of the sun, or Baalbec, whose magnificent ruins, so long the admiration of travellers, are said to have been lately wholly swallowed up by an earthquake. Rae Wilson's Travels, vol. ii. 144—151.

the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the house was round behind: and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom. And all his drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.* So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches† and for wisdom. And he gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had 1,400 chariots, and 12,000 horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance. And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for 600 shekels of silver, and an horse for 150: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means.‡

So Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth, for riches, and for wisdom; and all the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.§

* 1 Kings, x. 16—21. 2 Chron. ix. 15—20.

† His annual income has been estimated at more than £142,240,000. A. Clarke. In whose commentary at the end of 2 Chron. ix. see a curious account of this monarch's ivory throne, &c.

‡ 1 Kings, x. 26—29. 2 Chron. i. 14.

§ 1 Kings, x. 23. 25. 2 Chron. ix. 23, 24.

Amongst other distinguished characters who were attracted by the fame of the Israelitish monarch, was the queen of Sheba, who came from the uttermost parts of the earth,* to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and brought with her a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and the holocausts, or burnt offerings† which he offered in the house of Jehovah, there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land, of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be Jehovah, thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because Jehovah loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king 120 talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as those which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which he gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.‡

* Matt. xii. 42. 1 Kings, x. 1. 2 Chron. ix. 1.

† A. Clarke, and Luther.

‡ 1 Kings, x. 1—13. 2 Chron. ix. 1—12.

And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees and precious stones. And the king made of the almug* trees, pillars for the house of Jehovah, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day.

Neither did this monarch neglect to regulate the public worship of God, for three times in a year he offered burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto Jehovah; and he burnt incense upon the altar that was before Jehovah.†

But, unhappily, with all his wisdom, Solomon was not able to preserve the integrity of his religious character amidst all this grandeur and magnificence; for at the close of his life, when it might have been expected he would have more especially devoted himself to the service and worship of God, he fell into gross debauchery and idolatry. He cohabited with no less than seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, strange women of the nations, concerning which Jehovah had said,‡ Ye shall not go in unto them, neither shall they come in unto you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. And so it proved to be the case, for his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with Jehovah, his God, as was the heart of David, his father; for with his Zidonian wives he went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians; with his Ammonitish wives he worshipped Milcom and Moloch, the abominations of the Ammonites; and to please his Moabitish wives, he built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab; and likewise he did for all his strange wives, who burnt incense,

* Or algum, 2 Chron. ix. 10, 11. Probably rosewood, or other coloured wood. A. Clarke. Thyine wood. Burder, O. L. 545.

† 1 Kings, ix. 25.

‡ Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3, 4.

and sacrificed unto their gods; and thus did evil in the sight of Jehovah; and went not fully after Jehovah, as did David, his father.*

The anger of Jehovah was, therefore, excited against this highly favoured servant, as well indeed it might, wherefore he said unto him, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom: but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake,† and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen;‡ thus, however, in judgment remembering mercy, and his loving kindness to David.

In execution of this solemn sentence, several of the neighbouring princes were allowed to harass Solomon during the remainder of his days, and to destroy the tranquillity of his latter end; viz: Hadad,§ the Edomite,

* 1 Kings, xi. 1—8. See a curious plate of all these idols, in Fuller's Pisgah Sight of Canaan, p. 123.

† The *prevailing* lion must come out of the tribe of Judah: not only the tribe must be preserved, but the *regal line*, and the *regal right*. All this must be done for the true David's sake: and this was undoubtedly what God had in view, by thus miraculously preserving the tribe of Judah, and the royal line, in the midst of so general a defection. A. Clarke.

‡ 1 Kings, xi. 11—13.

§ It came to pass when David was in Edom, and Joab, the captain of the host, was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom, (for six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, after he had cut off every male in Edom,) that Hadad fled, he, and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child. And they arose out of Midian, and came to Paran; and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt; who gave him an

with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and Jehovah gave them rest round about,* and there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.†

In the following year, however, Baasha, king of Israel, came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa, king of Judah. Then Asa brought silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of Jehovah, and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying, There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father; behold I have sent thee silver and gold, go, break thy league with Baasha, king of Israel, that he may depart from me. And Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali. And it came to pass when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease. Then Asa, the king, took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was building; and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.‡

At that time Hanani, the seer, came to Asa, king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on Jehovah, thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand. Were not the Ethiopians and Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet because thou didst rely on Jehovah, he delivered them into thine hand. For the eyes

* 2 Chron. xv. 1—15. † 2 Chron. xv. 19.
‡ 2 Chron. xvi. 1—6. 1 Kings, xv. 16—22.

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* 2 Chron. xv. 1—15. † 2 Chron. xv. 19.
‡ 2 Chron. xvi. 1—6. 1 Kings, xv. 16—22.

of Jehovah run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly; therefore, from henceforth, thou shalt have wars. Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison-house, for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.*

And Asa, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great; yet in his disease he sought not to Jehovah, but to the physicians.†

And Asa reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem, when he died, and slept with his fathers; and they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the city of David; and laid him in the bed, which was filled with sweet odours, and divers kinds of spices, prepared by the apothecaries' art; and they made a very great burning for him;‡ and he was succeeded by his son,

JEHOSHAPHAT.§

A. C. 951. THIS monarch, who was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, strengthened himself against Israel, and placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah; and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa, his father, had taken. And Jehovah was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father, David, and sought not unto Baalim; but sought to Jehovah, the God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. Therefore Jehovah established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought

* 2 Chron. xvi. 7—10. † 2 Chron. xvi. 12.
‡ 2 Chron. xvi. 13, 14.
§ 1 Kings, xv. 24. 2 Chron. xvii. 1.

to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of Jehovah: moreover, he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.*

Under the influence of this pious feeling, in the third year of his reign, Jehoshaphat sent to his princes to teach in the cities of Judah, and with them he sent Levites and priests; and they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of Jehovah with them; and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people. And the fear of Jehovah fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat. Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, 7,700 rams, and 7,700 he goats. And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles and cities of store. And he had much business in the cities of Judah; and the men of war, mighty men of valour, were in Jerusalem.†

Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. And after certain years he went down to Ahab, to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth Gilead. And Ahab, king of Israel, said unto Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-Gilead? and he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war.‡

* 2 Chron. xvii. 3—6.

† 2 Chron. xvii. 9—13. The names of his officers were Adnah, the commander-in-chief; Jehohanan, the captain; Amaziah, a volunteer; Eliada, of Benjamin; Jehozabad; and their united force amounted to 1,160,000 men, besides the troops in garrison. 2 Chron. xvii. 14-19.

‡ 2 Chron. xviii. 1—3.

Jehoshaphat, however, stipulated that enquiry should be made at the word of Jehovah; upon which Ahab consulted 400 prophets, who all encouraged him to proceed.*

Jehoshaphat seems to have had some misgiving that all was not right, for he still asked, Is there not here a prophet of Jehovah besides, that we might enquire of him?† Ahab replied that there was Micaiah, the son of Imla, but that he hated him, as he never prophesied good unto him, but always evil; Jehoshaphat gently reproved his royal host, saying; Let not the king say so.‡

Micaiah being sent for, both the monarchs put on their royal robes and sat upon their thrones, in the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets prophesied before them; and one of them, Zedekiah, being desirous to render himself conspicuous, made him horns of iron, and said; Thus saith Jehovah, with these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed.§

The messenger who had been sent for Micaiah, urged him, most probably out of kindness, to coincide with the known wishes of Ahab, and the smooth counsel of his prophets; but Micaiah said, as Jehovah liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.‖

It is not easy to reconcile this pious and manly declaration with the prophet's conduct, unless we suppose he spoke ironically, or gave some indication by which Ahab knew he was not expressing his real sentiments; for when that monarch asked him whether they should go up to Ramoth Gilead to battle, or should forbear? he replied, Go ye up and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.¶

* 2 Chron. xviii. 4, 5. 9, 10. 11. 1 Kings, xxii. 6, 7. 10—12.
† 2 Chron. xviii. 6. 1 Kings, xxii. 7.
‡ 2 Chron. xviii. 7. 1 Kings, xxii. 8.
§ 2 Chron. xviii. 9, 10. 1 Kings, xxii. 10, 11.
‖ 2 Chron. xviii. 12, 13 1 Kings, xxii. 13, 14.
¶ 2 Chron. xviii. 14. 1 Kings, xxii. 15.

Upon being solemnly adjured by Ahab to speak nothing but the truth, in the name of Jehovah, Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and Jehovah said, These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace." Therefore hear the word of Jehovah: I saw Jehovah sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. And Jehovah said, Who shall entice Ahab, king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before Jehovah, and said, I will entice him. And Jehovah said unto him wherewith? And he said, I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And Jehovah said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail; go out, and do even so. Now, therefore, behold Jehovah hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and Jehovah hath spoken evil against thee.*

Upon this Zedekiah came near and smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the spirit of Jehovah from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold thou shalt see on that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself. Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son, and say; Thus saith the king, put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace. And Micaiah said, If thou certainly return in peace, then hath not Jehovah spoken by me, and he said, Hearken, all ye people.†

It is difficult to reconcile the conduct of Jehoshaphat in

* 2 Chron. xviii. 16—22 1 Kings, xxii. 17—23.
† 2 Chron. xviii. 23. 27. 1 Kings, xxii. 24—29.

going with Ahab after this denunciation, with his previous piety in enquiring the will of Jehovah; and the whole transaction ought to furnish us with a lesson against the danger of making unholy associations, and the mischief which may arise from being drawn within the vortex of their influence. We may well suppose that Jehoshaphat had no intention, when he left Jerusalem, to engage in a war with the Syrian monarch; but he knew that Ahab and his house were given up to idolatry, and had forsaken Jehovah and his worship; and that therefore he had no business there. Again, there can be no doubt, that when he desired a prophet of Jehovah should be sent for, he intended to be regulated by the will of Jehovah, as it might be declared by that prophet. Still, however, we see the influence of wicked Ahab, perhaps of his more wicked wife, Jezebel, and his idolatrous priests and courtiers, prevailed over all the pious and holy intentions of Jehoshaphat. And this monarch, we may suppose, was amiable and simple hearted, if not weak minded; for his perfidious host persuaded him to go into the battle dressed in that monarch's royal robes, whilst Ahab had disguised himself like a coward.*

The result, however, proved that no disguise can defeat the all searching eye of God; and that when the time arrives, at which he thinks fit to commission the arrow of divine vengeance, neither rock nor mountain, nor any human artifice, can protect the wicked from his wrath; and his glory and mercy were made equally conspicuous in protecting his pious, though inconsistent servant, Jehoshaphat. For the king of Syria having ordered his officers to fight neither with small or great, save only with the king of Israel, they crowded round the king of Judah by mistake, and pressed him so hard, that he cried out; when Jehovah helped him, and

* 2 Chron. xviii. 29. 1 Kings, xxii. 30.

moved the Syrians to depart from him; for perceiving that they had mistaken the object of their pursuit, they turned back.*

Ahab, nevertheless, was slain notwithstanding his disguise; for a Syrian archer drew a bow at a venture, and smote him between the joints of the harness, of which wound he died in the evening.†

Jehoshaphat, however, by the mercy of God, returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem; when Jehu, the son of Hanani, the seer, went out to meet him, and said to him, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate Jehovah? therefore is wrath upon thee from before Jehovah. Nevertheless, there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.‡

On his return home, Jehoshaphat resumed his pious labours for re-establishing the true worship of God, and went out again through the people, from Beersheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto Jehovah, the God of their fathers. And he set judges in the land, throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city, and said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for Jehovah, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now, let the fear of Jehovah be upon you; take heed, and do it: for there is no iniquity with Jehovah, our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts. Moreover, in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set, of the Levites and of the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of Jehovah, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem. And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of Jehovah, faith-

* 2 Chron. xviii. 30—31. 1 Kings, xxii. 32, 33.

† 2 Chron. xviii. 33, 34. 1 Kings, xxii. 34, 37.

‡ 2 Chron. xix. 1—3.

fully, and with a perfect heart. And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes, and judgments, ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against Jehovah, and so wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass. And, behold, Amariah, the chief priest, is over you in all matters of Jehovah; and Zebadiah, the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites shall be officers before you. Deal courageously, and Jehovah shall be with the good.*

The Moabites and Ammonites having united to invade the territories of Judah, and arrived in great force from beyond the sea on this side Syria, in Hazazon-tamar, or Engedi, Jehoshaphat set himself to seek Jehovah, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of Jehovah: even out of all the cities of Judah, they came to seek Jehovah. And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of Jehovah, before the new court, and said, O Jehovah, God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham, thy friend, for ever? And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help. And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab, and mount

* 2 Chron. xix. 4—11.

Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not: behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. And all Judah stood before Jehovah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.*

In answer to this earnest supplication, the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Jahaziel, a Levite, of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the congregation, and he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye, inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou, king Jehoshaphat: thus saith Jehovah unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed, by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's. To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they came up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of Jehovah with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed: to-morrow go out against them; for Jehovah will be with you.†

Surely it is not possible to imagine a more interesting and impressive scene, than a whole nation thus waiting upon the supreme majesty of heaven: well might David say, How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Jehovah of Hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of Jehovah: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.‡

At this annunciation of divine mercy, the monarch bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before Jehovah, worshipping

* 2 Chron. xx. 1—13. † 2 Chron. xx. 14—17.

‡ Ps. lxxxiv. 1, 2.

Jehovah. And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise Jehovah, God of Israel, with a loud voice on high.*

And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye, inhabitants of Jerusalem: believe in Jehovah, your God, so shall ye be established: believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto Jehovah, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise Jehovah: for his mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, Jehovah set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten. For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another. And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped. And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them, in abundance, both riches, with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.†

But Jehoshaphat not only besought Jehovah in the hour of danger, but remembered also to offer up praises and thanksgiving for his deliverance; for on the fourth day, the army assembled in the valley of Berachah, for there they blessed Jehovah: therefore the name of the same place was called the

* 2 Chron. xx. 18, 19. † 2 Chron. xx. 20—25.

valley of Berachah unto this day. Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for Jehovah had made them to rejoice over their enemies. And they came to Jerusalem, with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets, unto the house of Jehovah. And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they heard that Jehovah fought against the enemies of Israel. So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.*

Pious and devoted to the worship of God as this monarch unquestionably was, and notwithstanding the narrow escape and warning he had so lately experienced from his imprudent and culpable affinity with Ahab; he was now induced to enter into relations of friendship with his son, Ahaziah, who had succeeded him, and united with that monarch in building some ships in Eziongaber, in order to go to Tarshish and Ophir for gold. But Eliezer, the son of Dodavah, of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, Jehovah hath broken thy works. Whereupon the ships were broken or wrecked at Eziongaber, and were rendered unable to go to Tarshish. But Ahaziah having applied to Jehoshaphat to resume their purpose, the latter having now seen his error, positively refused.†

Jehoshaphat, however, fell into a similar error even once more; for Jehoram, another son of Ahab, having succeeded Ahaziah, Jehoshaphat made peace with him,‡ and formed an alliance with him and the king of Edom, against Mesha, king of Moab.

After a long march of seven days through the wilderness of Edom, the allied army became greatly distressed for water,

* 2 Chron. xx. 26—30.

† 2 Chron. xx. 35—37. 1 Kings, xxii. 48, 49.

‡ 1 Kings, xxii. 44.

and Jehoram began to despair; but Jehoshaphat said, Is there not a prophet of Jehovah. Upon being told that Elisha was in the neighbourhood, Jehoshaphat said, The word of Jehovah is with him; upon which all the three kings went down to wait upon the prophet.

Upon seeing them, Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay, for Jehovah hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, As Jehovah of Hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of Jehovah came upon him. And he said, thus saith Jehovah, make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith Jehovah, ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your



This monarch walked in the way of Asa, his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of Jehovah. Howbeit, the high places were not taken away; for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.* And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.† And after having reigned twenty-five years,‡ Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers, in the city of David, his father, and was succeeded by his son,

JEHORAM.

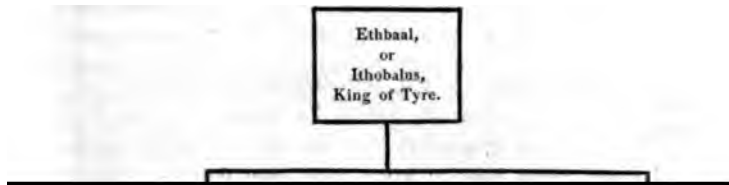
A. C. 889. Besides this prince, Jehoshaphat had left six other sons, viz: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah; to whom the deceased monarch had given great gifts of silver, gold, and precious things, with fenced cities in Judah. The first act of Jehoram's reign, after he had strengthened himself, was to slay all his brethren with the sword, and divers also of the princes of Israel.§

We are not informed what was the motive for this atrocious conduct; but as it is afterwards said,‖ that his brethren were better characters than himself, it is not unreasonable to imagine that they were true worshippers of God, and that therefore Jehoram was determined to put them out of his way.

* 1 Kings, xxii. 43. 2 Chron. xx. 32, 33.
† 1 Kings, xxii. 46.
‡ 1 Kings, xxii. 42. 2 Chron. xx. 31.
§ 2 Chron. xxi. 2. 4.
‖ 2 Chron. xxi. 13.

Having married Athaliah,* one of the daughters of Ahab,† he walked in the way of the idolatrous kings of Israel, like that rebellious house, and wrought that which was evil in the eyes of Jehovah.‡ Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication; and compelled Judah thereto.§ Howbeit, Jehovah would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with him; and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever.‖

* She was daughter of Jezebel, and consequently first cousin to the father of Dido, queen of Carthage, the heroine of the Æneid. Jahn's Heb. Commonwealth, i. 128. Univ. Hist. i. 407. 415.



Faithful to this promise, God sent to Jehoram, not Elijah in person, but a writing from him, saying; Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David, thy father; because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat, thy father, nor in the ways of Asa, king of Judah, but hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab; and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself: Behold, with a great plague will Jehovah smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods; and thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out, by reason of the sickness, day by day.*

Accordingly, first the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king; and although Jehoram went forth to Zair, with his princes, and all his chariots with him, and rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots; yet the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day.† Afterwards Libnah revolted from under his hand, because he had forsaken Jehovah, the God of his fathers.‡ And, finally, Jehovah stirred up against him the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians; and they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, or Ahaziah§ the youngest of his sons.‖

* 2 Chron. xxi. 12—15.

† 2 Chron. xxi. 8—10. 2 Kings, viii. 20—22. Gen. xxvii. 40.

‡ 2 Chron. xxi. 10. 2 Kings, viii. 22.

§ 2 Chron. xxii. 1.

‖ 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17.

After all this, and having reigned six years in Jerusalem,* Jehovah smote this monarch in his bowels with an incurable disease; so that after lying for two years, his bowels fell out, and he died of sore diseases, and departed without being desired; howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.†

AHAZIAH.

A. C. 885. THIS prince being called to the vacant throne by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in consequence of all his elder brethren having been slain by the Arabians,‡ he walked in the way of the house of Ahab; for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly. Wherefore he did evil in the sight of Jehovah, like the house of Ahab; for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction.§



sepulchre, with his fathers, in the city of David;* because, said they, he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought Jehovah with all his heart;† such honour have all his saints.‡

And the destruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Jehoram; for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu, the son of Nimshi, whom Jehovah had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. And it came to pass that when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them.§

Ahaziah reigned only one year; and, upon his death, the seed royal of the house of Judah had well nigh been extinguished; for the dowager queen, Athaliah, destroyed them all except Joash, the late king's son by Zibiah, of Beersheba,‖ and usurped herself the royal authority.

ATHALIAH.

A.C. 884. The promises of Jehovah are for ever sure, and those which he made to his servant David, could not be disappointed by the devices of men or devils. As, therefore, an Egyptian princess was provided by Jehovah-jireh to preserve and protect a Moses,¶ so now Jehoshabeath, a daughter of the late king, Jehoram, who had married Jehoiada, the priest, was appointed by the same divine providence to preserve and protect her infant nephew, Joash. This princess, therefore, stole him from among the king's

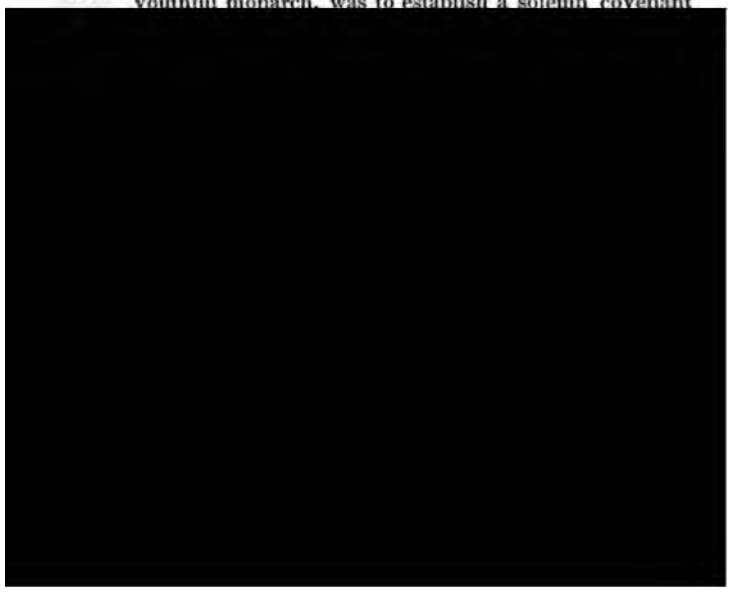
* 2 Kings, ix. 27, 28.
† 2 Chron. xxii. 9. ‡ Ps. cxlix. 9.
§ 2 Chron. xxii. 7, 8. 2 Kings, x. 12—14.
‖ 2 Kings, xii. 1. 2 Chron. xxiv. 1. ¶ Exod. ii. 5—11.

sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bed-chamber, and hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not; and he was hid with her and her husband in the house of God six years.*

In the seventh year of this usurpation, Jehoiada, having previously prepared the leaders of the people and the army, brought Joash forth to them in the temple; and having crowned him, the people gave him the testimony,† and clapped their hands and said, God save the king. Athaliah having heard the voice of the guard, came to the temple exclaiming, Treason! but she was immediately seized by the command of Jehoiada, and dragged out and slain in the horse-gate.‡

JOASH.

A. C. The first act of Jehoiada's administration under the youthful monarch, was to establish a solemn covenant



land, and they brought down the king from the house of Jehovah, and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the kings. And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in quiet.*

The sons† of Athaliah having broken up the house of God, and bestowed all the dedicated things of the house of Jehovah upon Baalim, Joash was minded to repair and restore the same. And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out into the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Levites hastened it not. And the king called for Jehoiada, the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah, and out of Jerusalem, the collection, according to the commandment of Moses, the servant of Jehovah, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness? And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of Jehovah. And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to Jehovah the collection that Moses, the servant of God, laid upon Israel in the wilderness.‡ And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end. Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought into the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe, and the high priest's officer, came and emptied the chest, and took it and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance. And the king

* 2 Kings, xi. 18—20. 2 Chron. xxiii. 17—21.

† It is not said who they were.

‡ Exod. xxx. 12. 14.

and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of Jehovah; and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of Jehovah; and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of Jehovah. So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them; and they set the house of God in its state, and strengthened it. And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels for the house of Jehovah; even vessels to minister and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of Jehovah, continually all the days of Jehoiada.*

And Joash did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah all the days of Jehoiada, the priest, who took for him two wives, and he begat sons and daughters.† But the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.‡

And Jehoiada, the priest, died at the age of 130 years, and

* 2 Chron. xxiv. 4—14. 2 Kings, xii. 4—16.

† 2 Chron. xxiv. 2, 3. 2 Kings, xii. 2.

‡ 2 Kings, xii. 3. The high places in Judah and Israel, and which had the effect of fostering the predilection of the Jews for idolatry, and of facilitating their return to idolatrous practices from time to time, may be compared to the remnants of popery allowed to remain in the episcopal church of England, at the time of the reformation; and, at a subsequent period, ingrafted and made of imperative obligation by Laud and his admirers. It was the evils which such remnants were likely to produce, and not the things themselves, which induced the conscientious Hooper, and other good men, to resist their imposition; and even Cranmer himself foresaw the probable result. That result has been but too well verified, and something very much like popery having become the fashionable religion, the papists have had but little difficulty in the removal of their wholesome shackles, during the present year (1829); and, probably, a few years more will produce even a more fatal result; which may a gracious providence, in infinite mercy, avert!

they buried him in the city of David, among the kings; because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.*

After the death of Jehoiada, came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of Jehovah, the God of their fathers, and served groves and idols; and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem, for this their trespass. Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto Jehovah; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear. And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, the priest, who stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of Jehovah, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken Jehovah, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of Jehovah. Thus Joash, the king, remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada, his father, had done to him, but slew his son.† And when he died, he said, Jehovah look upon it, and require it.‡

For this wicked departure, the judgments of God soon visited Joash with the utmost severity; for the king of Syria came against Judah and Jerusalem with a small company of men, and destroyed all the princes of the people, and Jehovah delivered a very great host into their hand, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus, because they had forsaken Jehovah, the God of their fathers.§

Nor was this all; for the Syrians having left Joash in great

* 2 Chron. xxiv. 15, 16. This good priest was born in the reign of Rehoboam.

† Most probably the Zechariah, son of Barachiah, referred to by our Lord. See A. Clarke on Matt. xxiii. 34, 35.

‡ 2 Chron. xxiv. 17—22.

§ 2 Kings, xii. 17, 18. 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, 24.

diseases,* two of his servants, Zabad or Jozachar, the son of Shimeath, an Ammonitess; and Jehozabad, the son of Shimrith, a Moabitess, conspired against him, for the blood of the sons† of Jehoiada, the priest, and slew him on his bed, in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla, and he died; and they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings;‡ and he was succeeded by his son,

AMAZIAH.

A. C. 839. As soon as this prince felt secure on his throne, he slew those who had assassinated his father, but not their children, observing in that respect the injunction of Moses.§

Having determined, for some cause which is not declared, upon an expedition against the Edomites, Amaziah collected a large army of 300,000 chosen men, over which he appointed officers, and hired 100,000 Israelites for 100 talents of silver. He was diverted from this purpose, however, by a message from God, commanding him not to let the Israelites go with him, as God was not with them; and threatening him with defeat unless he dismissed them. Unwilling to lose his 100 talents, he anxiously enquired what was to become of them; but the man of God replied, Jehovah is able to give thee

* Although no commentator has noticed this expression, it can hardly be the right reading—it seems as if it should rather be "in his weakness or impoverished state." See Schindler's Lex. Pentagl. which gives eight variations of the Hebrew root. In languoribus magnis, Vulg.

† The Septuagint and the Vulgate have this in the singular; but the expression itself does not necessarily imply that Jehoiada had more than one son. See Asellio and Balthius, apud B. O. L. 633.

‡ 2 Chron. xxiv. 25, 26. 2 Kings, xii. 20, 21.

§ 2 Chron. xxv. 3, 4. 2 Kings, xiv. 5, 6. Deut. xxiv. 16.

much more than this; upon which Amaziah, though perhaps reluctantly, separated the Israelites from his own subjects, and sent them home; wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger.* And which they vented by falling upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even unto Bethhoron, and smote 3,000 of them, and took much spoil.†

Amaziah led his army to the valley of salt, and slew 10,000 of the children of Seir, or Edomites, and took the city of Selah, and called the name of it Joktheel. He also brought away 10,000 captives, and precipitating them from the top of a rock, they were dashed to pieces.‡ But, notwithstanding this severity against the persons of the Edomites, instead of destroying the gods of Seir, he brought them home with him, and set them up for his own gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense to them.§ Wherefore the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, who said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand? And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear: why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.‖

Thus doomed to destruction, vain-glorious, and subject to evil counsellors, Amaziah was induced to send a challenge to Jehoahaz, the king of Israel, probably by way of resenting the injury inflicted upon the cities of Judah, by the Ephraimites on their return home. The reply of the Israelitish monarch

* 2 Chron. xxv. 5. 10. † 2 Chron. xxv. 13.
‡ 2 Chron. xxv. 11, 12. 2 Kings, xiv. 7.
§ 2 Chron. xxv. 14. ‖ 2 Chron. xxv. 15, 16.

was sufficiently insulting: The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thistle. Thou sayest, lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldest thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou and Judah with thee?*

Whether this warning was in derision or sincerity, it was unavailing; for Amaziah would not hear, for it came of God that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom.†

The hostile armies met at Bethshemesh, and the monarchs, it is said, looked each other in the face; but Judah was beaten and every man fled to his tent. And Joash took Amaziah prisoner, and pressing forward to Jerusalem, brake down 400 cubits of the wall of the city, from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate. And he took all the gold and the silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God with Obede-dom,‡ and the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.§

The mother of Amaziah was Jehoaddan, of Jerusalem; and he reigned twenty-nine years: at first he did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah, but not with a perfect heart,‖ as we have already seen. And after he had turned away from following Jehovah, a conspiracy broke out against him, and he fled to Lachish; but the conspirators sent after

* 2 Chron. xxv. 18, 19. 2 Kings, xiv. 9, 10.

† 2 Chron. xxv. 20.

‡ Who kept the house of Asuppim, or the Collections. 1 Chron. xxvi. 15. A. Clarke.

§ 2 Chron. xxv. 21. 24. 2 Kings, xiv. 11—14.

‖ 2 Chron. xxv. 1, 2.

and slew him there. And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of David;* and he was succeeded by his son,

UZZIAH.†

A. C. 810. This monarch, whose mother was Jecoliah of Jerusalem, was only sixteen years old when he ascended the throne; and he built Eloth, and restored it to Judah.‡ He did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah, save that the high places were not removed; the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.§ And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought Jehovah, God made him to prosper. And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines. And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal,‖ and the Mehunims. And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly. Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem, at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them. Also, he built towers in the desert, and digged many wells; for he had much cattle, both in the low country, and in the plains: husbandmen

* 2 Chron. xxv. 27, 28. 2 Kings, xiv. 19, 20.

† Or Azariah.

‡ 2 Chron. xxvi. 1—3. 2 Kings, xiv. 21, 22. xv. 2.

§ 2 Chron. xxvi. 4. 2 Kings, xv. 3, 4.

‖ Or Petra—according to the Sept. Petra was the chief city of Edom, the remarkable ruins of which, a vast barren rock, have lately been discovered. See Keith's Evidence from Prophecy, p.p. 180. 236.

also, and vine dressers in the mountains, and in Carmel; for he loved husbandry. Moreover, Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account, by the hand of Jeiel, the scribe, and Maaseiah, the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, one of the king's captains. The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were 2,600. And under their hand was an army, 307,500, that made war with mighty power to help the king against the enemy. And Uzziah prepared for them, throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and harbergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones. And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal.* And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped till he was strong.†

Thus far all went well; but the wise and pious Zechariah being most probably dead, and Uzziah having become strong, his heart was lifted up to destruction; for he transgressed against Jehovah, his God, and went into the temple of Jehovah to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah, the priest, went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of Jehovah that were valiant men; and they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto Jehovah, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense; go out of the sanctuary for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from Jehovah, God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense; and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in

* "This account is long prior to any thing of the kind among either the Greeks or Romans." A. Clarke.

† 2 Chron. xxvi. 4—15.

his forehead, before the priests, in the house of Jehovah, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah, the chief priest, and all the priests looked upon him, and behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because Jehovah had smitten him.*

It does not appear that Uzziah ever gave into the idolatrous worship which had so long infected both the kingdoms; but still, not having properly humbled himself under this severe dispensation, he remained a leper until the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being cut off from the house of Jehovah;† and Jotham, his son, was over the king's house, judging the people of the land, quasi regent.‡

During part of the reign of this monarch flourished the holy prophets, Isaiah,§ Hosea,‖ and Amos;¶ and also during his reign a formidable earthquake took place, probably on account of his great sin,** in presuming to offer up incense,

* 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—20.

† Lev. xiii. 46.

‡ 2 Chron. xxvi. 21. 2 Kings, xv. 5.

§ Isaiah. i. 1. vi. 1. It is evident some chronicle of the transactions of this monarch has been lost, for in 2 Kings, xv. 6. we are referred to the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah; and 2 Chronicles, xxvi. 22, informs us that the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write; whereas, no such relation is to be found in the evangelical prophet.

‖ Hosea, i. 1. ¶ Amos, i. 1.

** Josephus informs us, that the infliction of leprosy upon this monarch was preceded by a tremendous earthquake, accompanied with other indications of the wrath of Jehovah. "In the meantime, a great earthquake shook the ground, and a rent was made in the temple, and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king's face, insomuch that the leprosy seized upon him immediately. And before the city, at a place called Engedi, half the mountain broke off from the rest on the west, and rolled itself four furlongs, and stood still at the east mountain, till the roads, as well as

and which had left so strong an impression on the minds of the people, as to be proverbial amongst them, as late as the æra of Zechariah the prophet, who lived about three hundred years afterwards.

After a long reign of fifty-two years, Uzziah died at Jerusalem, under sentence of the Levitical regulations for leprosy, and he slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers, in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; and he was succeeded by his son,*

JOTHAM,

A. C. 758. Who ascended the throne of Judah at the age of twenty-five. His mother was Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok; and he did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that his father Uzziah did; howbeit he entered not into the temple of Jehovah; the high places were not removed; and the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places. He built the higher gate of the house of Jehovah, and on the wall of Ophel he built much. Moreover, he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers. He fought also with the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him, the same year, an hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year and the third.† So Jotham

the king's gardens, were spoiled by the destruction." Josephus, vol. ii. 35. And that some signal earthquake took place during this reign, appears from Zech. xiv. 5.

* 2 Chron. xxvi. 23. 2 Kings, xv. 7.

† See the prophecies against Ammon—their remarkable fulfilment—and the present state of that country and its cities, well illustrated in Keith's Evidence from Prophecy, p. 160.

became mighty because he prepared his ways before Jehovah, his God.*

In the latter days of this monarch, Jehovah began to send against Judah, Rezin, the king of Syria, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah;† and after reigning fifteen years, he slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and he was succeeded by his son,‡

AHAZ.

A.D. 742. This monarch was twenty years old when he began to reign, but he did not that which was right in the sight of Jehovah, like David, his father; for he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire,§ after the abominations of the heathen, whom Jehovah had cast out before the children of Israel. He sacrificed also, and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.‖

Then Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, son of Remaliah king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war; and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him.¶

For upon this occasion it was, that the prophet Isaiah was sent to this monarch with the following remarkable prediction: And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and

* 2 Chron. xxvii. 1—6 2 Kings, xv. 32—36.
† 2 Kings, xv. 37.
‡ 2 Kings, xv. 38. 2 Chron. xxvii. 9.
§ See A. Clarke on Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2. 4. 5.
‖ 2 Chron. xxviii. 1—4. ¶ 2 Kings, xvi. 5.

the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. Then said Jehovah unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub, thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field; and say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet: fear not, neither be faint hearted, for the two tails of these smoking fire brands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah. Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal: thus saith Jehovah, God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and within three score and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people.* And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

Moreover, Jehovah spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of Jehovah, thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt Jehovah. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore Jehovah himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

* Which came exactly to pass; for in the twenty-second year of Manasseh, Esarhaddon, king of Assyria and Babylon, carried away captive all that were left in Samaria of the last captivity." Bp. Wilson. Bp. Lowth. Prideaux, l. 55.

Jehovah shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria. And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes. In the same day shall Jehovah shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep; and it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give, that he shall eat butter; for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land. And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briers and thorns. With arrows and with bows shall men come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns. And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of the briers and thorns; but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the breeding of lesser cattle.

Moreover, Jehovah said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz. And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah, the priest, and Zechariah, the son of Jeberechiah. And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said Jehovah to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus, and the spoil of Samaria, shall be taken away before the king of Assyria. Jehovah spake unto me again, saying, Forasmuch

as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin, and Remaliah's son: now therefore, behold, Jehovah bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks; and he shall pass through Judah, he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck: and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.*

Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with you.

For Jehovah spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, a confederacy, to all them to whom this people would say, a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify Jehovah of Hosts himself: and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling,† and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among

* "The land of the tribe of Judah, is here called the land of Immanuel; because Immanuel was to come out of that tribe, and that tribe should have a sceptre and government till Immanuel should come, which none of the other tribes had, having all lost the sceptre before our Lord came." Bp. Wilson.

† Rom. ix. 32. 1 Peter, ii. 7, 8. "Jesus Christ was this stone of stumbling; ergo, Jesus Christ was Jehovah of Hosts." Jones on the Trinity.

my disciples. And I will wait upon Jehovah, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of Hosts, who dwelleth in mount Zion. And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward. And they shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness: nevertheless, the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation.

When at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.* Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called,

* Matth. iv. 15.

Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of Hosts will perform this.*

Encouraged by this prophecy to expect relief at least from the immediate danger, Ahaz defended the city of Jerusalem; and the two hostile armies were obliged to raise the siege.† But the king of Syria recovered Eloth, and established a colony of Syrians in that city.‡

The infidel feeling, however, which Ahaz had discovered, and the little disposition to humble himself which he afterwards evinced, subjected him to a repetition of this invasion; for the next year, the associate monarchs marched against him again, and Jehovah, his God, delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria: and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter. For Pekah, the son of Remaliah, slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, who were all valiant men: because they had forsaken Jehovah, the God of their fathers. And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah, the king's son, and Azrikam, the governor of the house, and Elkanah, that was next to the king. And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren, 200,000, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.§

* Isaiah, vii. viii. ix. As to this prophecy, see A. Clarke, Bp. Lowth, and Bp. Wilson.

† Prideaux, i. 23. ‡ 2 Kings, xvi. 6.

§ 2 Chron. xxviii. 5—8. Dr. Wall, in loco.

But Judah was not to be finally cut off, and, therefore, in this extremity, Oded, a prophet of Jehovah, went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, because Jehovah, the God of your fathers, was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage that reacheth up unto heaven. And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem, for bondmen and bondwomen unto you: but are there not with you, even with you, sins against Jehovah, your God? Now hear me, therefore, and deliver the captives again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren: for the fierce wrath of Jehovah is upon you. Then certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah, the son of Johanan, Berechiah, the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah, the son of Shallum, and Amasa, the son of Hadlai, stood up against them that came from the war, and said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against Jehovah already, ye intend to add more to our sins and to our trespasses: for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel. So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation. And the men, which were expressed by name, rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren; then they returned to Samaria.*

The Edomites also came and smote Judah, and carried away captives. The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the

* 2 Chron. xxviii. 9—15. "We can scarcely find a parallel to this act of humanity, in the universal history of the wars which savage man has carried on against his fellows, from the foundation of the world." A. Clarke.

low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho, with the villages thereof; and Timnah, with the villages thereof; Gimzo also, and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there. For Jehovah brought Judah low because of Ahaz, king of Israel; for he made Judah naked and transgressed sore against Jehovah.*

Whereupon Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser† king of Assyria, saying; I am thy servant and thy son, come up and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him; for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin. And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, and saw an altar that was at Damascus; and king Ahaz sent to Urijah, the priest, the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. And Urijah, the priest, built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus; so Urijah, the priest, made it against king Ahaz came from Damascus. And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar; and the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon: and he burnt his burnt offering, and his meat offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings, upon the altar. And he brought also the brazen altar, which was before Jehovah, from the fore front of the house, from between the altar

* 2 Chron. xxviii. 17—19.

† Most probably Arbaces. A. Clarke, Dean Prideaux, and Un. Hist.

and the house of Jehovah, and put it on the north side of the altar. And king Ahaz commanded Urijah, the priest, saying; Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering, and the evening meat offering, and the king's burnt sacrifice, and his meat offering; with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice; and the brazen altar shall be for me to inquire by. Thus did Urijah, the priest, according to all that Ahaz commanded. And king Ahaz cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down the sea from off the brazen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones. And the covert for the Sabbath, that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of Jehovah for the king of Assyria.*

Tiglath-pileser, however, although he came unto him, did not strengthen him, but rather distressed him; for Ahaz took away a portion out of the house of Jehovah, and out of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave it unto the king of Assyria; but he helped him not.†

And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against Jehovah: this is that king Ahaz. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him; and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel. And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of Jehovah; and he made him altars in every corner of Jeru-

* 2 Kings, xvi. 7—18. 2 Chron. xxviii. 16.
† 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21.

salem. And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger Jehovah, the God of his fathers.*

After reigning sixteen years, Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of Jerusalem; but brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel;† and he was succeeded by his son,‡

HEZEKIAH.

A.C. 726. THIS good prince, whose reign, amidst so much sin and wickedness, is as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,§ ascended the throne at the age of 25, and his mother was Abi, the daughter of Zechariah; and he did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that David his father did.‖

He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan. He trusted in Jehovah, the God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to Jehovah, and departed not from following him; but kept his commandments which Jehovah commanded Moses. And Jehovah was with him, and he pros-

* 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. 25.

† See a curious account in Burder how the Israelites, Egyptians, &c. marked their sense of the characters and conduct of their kings, by the various modes and places in which they interred them; thus endeavouring to operate upon the minds of their successors. O.C. 448.

‡ 2 Chron. xxviii. 27 2 Kings, xvi. 20.

§ Isaiah, xxxii. 2.

‖ 2 Chron. xxix. 1, 2. 2 Kings, xviii. 2, 3.

pered whithersoever he went forth; and he rebelled* against the king of Assyria, and served him not. He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.†

He also opened the doors of the house of Jehovah, and repaired them. And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street, and said unto them; Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify yourselves, and sanctify the house of Jehovah, the God of your fathers; and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place: for our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of Jehovah, our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of Jehovah, and turned their backs. Also, they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps; and have not burned incense, nor offered burnt offerings in the holy place, unto the God of Israel. Wherefore the wrath of Jehovah was upon Judah and Jerusalem; and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes. For lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword; and our sons, and our daughters, and our wives are in captivity for this. Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with Jehovah, the God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us. My sons, be not now negligent, for Jehovah hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him; and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense.‡

The Levites having sanctified themselves, proceeded to cleanse the house of Jehovah, and the altar of burnt offerings with all the vessels thereof, and the shewbread table, with all the vessels thereof; and having prepared and sanctified all

* See 2 Kings, xvi. 7.

† 2 Kings, xviii. 4—8. ‡ 2 Chron. xxix. 3—11.

the vessels which king Ahaz, in his reign, had cast away in his transgression, and placed them before Jehovah, Hezekiah rose early and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of Jehovah, and offered the burnt offerings; and arranged the Levites and priests according to the commandment of David, and of Gad, his seer, and of Nathan, the prophet. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded; and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him, bowed themselves and worshipped. Moreover, Hezekiah, the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praise unto Jehovah, with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped. Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto Jehovah, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of Jehovah. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart, burnt offerings. And the number of the burnt offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, and two hundred lambs; all these were for a burnt offering to Jehovah. And the consecrated things were six hundred oxen, and three thousand sheep; but the priests were too few, so that they could not slay all the burnt offerings: wherefore, their brethren, the Levites, did help them till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves; for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests. And also the burnt offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings, and the drink offerings for every burnt offering. So the service for the house of Jehovah was set in order. And

Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people, for the thing was done suddenly.*

Not satisfied with restoring the worship of the true God amongst his own subjects only, Hezekiah invited all Israel, as well as Judah, with Ephraim and Manasseh, to come to the house of Jehovah, at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto Jehovah, God of Israel. So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem; for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written. So the posts† went with the letters from the king, and his princes, throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying; Ye children of Israel, turn again unto Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. And be ye not like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against Jehovah, the God of their fathers; who, therefore, gave them up to desolation, as ye see. Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto Jehovah, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever, and serve Jehovah, your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you. For if ye turn again unto Jehovah, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land; for Jehovah, your God, is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him. So the posts passed from city to city,

* 2 Chron. xxix. 12—36. "What amazing power and influence has God lodged with *kings!* They can sway a whole empire nearly as they please; and when they declare themselves in behalf of religion, they have the *people* uniformly on their side." A. Clarke.

† Or couriers.

through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun; but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. Nevertheless, divers of Asher, and Manasseh, and of Zebulun, humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. Also in Judah, the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king, and of the princes, by the word of Jehovah. And there assembled at Jerusalem, much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread, in the second month, a very great congregation. And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron. Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the month; and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of Jehovah; and they stood in their place, after their manner, according to the law of Moses, the man of God; the priests sprinkled the blood which they received of the hand of the Levites. For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified; therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers, for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto Jehovah. For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written: but Hezekiah prayed for them, saying; The good Jehovah pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, Jehovah, the God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary; and Jehovah hearkened unto Hezekiah and healed the people. And the children of Israel, that were present at Jerusalem, kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days, with great gladness; and the Levites and the priests praised Jehovah day by day, singing with loud instruments, unto Jehovah. And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that

taught the good knowledge of Jehovah; and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to Jehovah, the God of their fathers. And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days; and they kept other seven days with gladness. For Hezekiah, king of Judah, did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep; and a great number of priests sanctified themselves. And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced: so there was great joy in Jerusalem; for since the time of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel, there was not the like in Jerusalem. Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people; and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven. Now when all this was finished, all Israel that were present, went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also, and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.*

This monarch also appointed the courses of the priests and Levites, and commanded a provision to be made for them, and which was brought in, in great abundance; and when he and the princes saw the heaps, they blessed Jehovah, and his people Israel; after which he settled the genealogy of the priests and Levites. And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good, and right, and truth, before

* 2 Chron. xxx. xxxi. 1.

Jehovah, his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart and prospered.*

Hezekiah being afflicted with a sore disease† which threatened death, the prophet Isaiah came to him, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto Jehovah, saying, I beseech thee, O Jehovah, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of Jehovah came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David, thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of Jehovah. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that Jehovah will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of Jehovah the third day? And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of Jehovah, that Jehovah will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah, the

* 2 Chron. xxxi. 2—21.

† In placing the sickness of Hezekiah, and the embassy from Babylon, prior to the invasion of Sennacherib, I follow Prideaux, A. Clarke, Whiston, and, I believe, almost all the chronologers.

prophet, cried unto Jehovah: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.* And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.†

Upon this occasion Isaiah has recorded the following writing or reflections of Hezekiah upon his recovery: I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see Jehovah, even Jehovah, in the land of the living. I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent. I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Jehovah, I am oppressed: undertake for me. What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years, in the bitterness of my soul. O Jehovah, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou

* A. Clarke supposes this miracle was produced by the power of refraction; and at the end of 2 Kings, xx. subjoins a luminous dissertation upon the subject, and gives the form of such a dial as he supposes would produce the effect related. But Dr. Wall on this passage, and on Isaiah, xxxviii. 8, contends that the word dial is not in the text, but should be rendered stairs. See also Burder, O. C. 431. Whiston, ii. 50.

† 2 Kings, xx. 1—11. 2 Chron. xxxii. 24. Isaiah, xxxviii. 1—8, 21, 22. Burder O. C. 607.

[redacted] thy back. For the grave cannot [redacted] cannot celebrate thee: they that go down [redacted] cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the [redacted] he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the [redacted] shall make known thy truth. Jehovah was ready to [redacted]: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed [redacted] all the days of our life, in the house of Jehovah.*

But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit [redacted] unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there [redacted] wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.† For Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, having heard of his sickness, and of the great miracle‡ which

* Isaiah, xxxviii. 9—20. † 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.

‡ Isaiah calls the Babylonish monarch Merodach-baladan, xxxix. 1. See Patrick's Note on 2 Kings, xx. 11. This miracle had evidently been noticed in Chaldea, so famous for astronomical observations, and which was manifestly the cause of the embassy; the object of which was "to enquire of the wonder which was done in the land." 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. And it had also been observed

[redacted]

had been performed, sent letters and a present to him, and to enquire of the wonder which had been done in the land.*

The great searcher of hearts discovering what was probably wholly unknown to all human observers, and perhaps even to this good prince himself, left him to himself to try him, in order that he might know all that was in his heart.† Hezekiah, therefore, hearkened unto the Babylonish ambassadors, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures; there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. Then came Isaiah, the prophet, unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen; there is nothing among my treasures that I have

stopped the sun in its progress. He had here a fair opportunity of shewing them and their king the vanity of their idolatry in worshipping the sun, evidently under the direction of a superior being. He ought also to have given God all the glory in this matter, and have rested on him and him alone, for safety, who had just then given him such a striking proof of his power and favour. *Worldly wisdom* is *arrant folly;* and when set in opposition to the will of God, will be sure to disappoint us. Even the noblest instance of wisdom and love God ever shewed, in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ, if not accepted, with humility and simplicity, in God's own way by faith, will not have its blessed effect. Wordly wisdom ensnared Hezekiah; and carnal wisdom, ever attended with loftiness of heart, is daily destroying its thousands." Bogatzky. July xi. Morning.

* 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. 2 Kings, xx. 12. Isaiah, xxxix. 1.

† 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.

not shewed them. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of Jehovah; Behold the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon; nothing shall be left saith Jehovah.* And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away, and they shall be ennuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of Jehovah which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?† Hezekiah, however, having humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the wrath of Jehovah came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.‡

It came to pass in the fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah, that Sennacherib,§ king of Assyria, came and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself. And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, he took counsel with his princes, and his mighty men, to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city; and they did help him. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying; Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water? Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo, in the city of David; and made darts and shields in abundance.

* This was an exact prophecy of the Babylonish captivity, and which was as exactly fufilled near a hundred years after, in the reign of Zedekiah. 2 Kings, xxv. 2 Chron. xxxvi. Dan. i. 2.

† 2 Kings, xx. 13—19. Isaiah, xxxix. 2—8.

‡ 2 Chron. xxxii. 26.

§ Or Sargon. Isaiah, xx. 1.

And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying; Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyriá, nor for all the multitude that is with him; for there be more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is Jehovah, our God, to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah, King of Judah.*

Notwithstanding this preparation, and the confidence he had created in his subjects, Hezekiah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, which that monarch was besieging with all his power, saying; I have offended, return from me; that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah, king of Judah, three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of Jehovah, and from the pillars which he had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.†

All such purchased deliverances are usually futile; and, as our British ancestors found it with reference to the Danes, the enemy soon returned, for Sennacherib the next year sent his officers, Tartan, and Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh from Lachish, with a great host to Jerusalem: and when they were come up, they stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field; and having called to the king, Hezekiah sent out to them Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah, whom the officers of Sennacherib thus insultingly addressed; "Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou

* 2 Chron. xxxii. 1—8. † 2 Kings, xviii. 14—16.

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* 2 Chron. xxxii. 1—8. † 2 Kings, xviii. 14—16.

sayest I have counsel and strength for the war, Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? Now, behold thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man bear, it will go into his hand and pierce it; so is Pharaoh, king of Egypt unto all that trust on him. Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying; Jehovah, our God, shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Is not that he whose high places and altars the same Hezekiah has taken away, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying; Ye shall worship before one altar in Jerusalem, and burn incense upon it? Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? Who was there amongst all the gods of those nations, that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand? Now, therefore, let not Hezekiah deceive you nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him; for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers; how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?* I pray thee, therefore, give pledges to my lord, the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee 2,000 horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. How wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Am I now come up without Jehovah against this place to destroy it? Jehovah said to me, Go up against this land and destroy it."†

And the Assyrians spake even more violently against

* 2 Kings, xviii. 17—22. 2 Chron. xxxii. 9—15.
† 2 Kings, xviii. 23—25. Isaiah, xxxvi. 8—10.

Jehovah, and against his servant, Hezekiah; and Sennacherib wrote railing or blasphemous letters against Jehovah, the God of Israel, to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of other lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.*

Eliakim and his companions having entreated Sennacherib's officers to speak in the Syrian, and not in the Hebrew language, in order that the people might not be affected by their harangue; Rabshakeh said to them, in order to affright them and to trouble them, that they might take the city, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? Hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own excrements, and drink their own urine with you?†

Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice, in the Jew's language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria: thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: neither let Hezekiah make you trust in Jehovah, saying, Jehovah will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah; for thus saith the king of Assyria: Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern: until I come and take you away to a land like your land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive, and of honey, that

* 2 Chron. xxxii. 16, 17.

† 2 Kings, xviii. 26, 27. Isaiah, xxxvi. 11, 12. That is, that they may be fully apprized of the dreadful extremities to which the city will be reduced by siege, if they continue their allegiance to Hezekiah. A. Clarke, on 2 Kings, xviii. 27.

ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, Jehovah will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? Have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand? Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand? But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.* And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, which were the work of the hands of man.†

Eliakim and his companions having presented themselves before Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and repeated the boasting threats of Rabshakeh, the pious monarch rent his clothes also, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Jehovah. And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna, the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz: and they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy; for the children are come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring forth. It may be Jehovah, thy God, will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria, his master, hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which Jehovah, thy God, hath heard; wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left. So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah: and Isaiah said unto them, thus shall ye say to your master, thus saith Jeho-

* 2 Kings, xviii. 28—36. Isaiah, xxxvi. 12—21.
† 2 Chron. xxxii. 18, 19.

vah; Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast* upon him, and he shall hear a rumour,† and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.‡

Soon afterwards, however, Sennacherib sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying: Let not thy God in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered? Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my Fathers have destroyed, as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden, which were in Telassar? Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? And Hezekiah received

† "A pestilential wind, such as the Arabians call *Smum*, or *Simoom*, which instantly suffocates both man and beast; and which is afterwards called the angel of the Lord, or the messenger of death." See Isaiah, xxxvii. 36. A. Clarke, Gray's Key, 189, Burder, O. C. 430, extracting from Bruce and Niebuhr. But all these learned commentators should recollect that whilst it may be true that God might condescend, upon this and other occasions, to make use of some human and natural instruments, yet that there is no evidence that he actually did so; and that all the powers of nature are under his control; and that it is equally easy for him to call into instant existence, new and unheard of agents and instruments, as to apply those, already formed by his almighty hand, to some unusual and immediate purpose.

† Viz.—That Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, had invaded Assyria. See the whole of this war of the Assyrian monarch, who probably was then besieging Pelusium, fully elucidated in Prid. i. 41—51. and Un. Hist. i. 894.

‡ 2 Kings, xix. 1—8. Isaiah, xxxvii. 1—8.

the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up unto the house of Jehovah, and spread it before Jehovah: and Hezekiah prayed unto Jehovah, saying; O Jehovah of Hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the Cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O Jehovah, and hear; open thine eyes, O Jehovah, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, who hath sent to reproach the living God. Of a truth, O Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries, and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were no Gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them. Now, therefore, O Jehovah, our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art Jehovah, even thou only.

Then Isaiah, the son of Amoz, sent unto Hezekiah, saying; "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib, king of Assyria;



and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places. Hast thou not heard long ago, how I have done it;* and of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defenced cities into ruinous heaps. Therefore their inhabitants were of small power: they were dismayed and confounded: they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up. But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.†

And this shall be a sign unto thee,‡ ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself;§ and the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: for out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of Jehovah of Hosts shall do this. Therefore thus saith Jehovah, concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith Jehovah. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.‖

* Viz.—Prophesied of it by Isaiah himself, ch. x. 5.

† A most wonderful prediction, and much resembling the exploits and fate of the Corsican adventurer of our own times.

‡ Addressed to Hezekiah.

§ That is, it shall be a sabbatic year, or year of jubilee. Whiston, ii. 47.

‖ 2 Kings, xix. 9—34. Isaiah, xxxvii. 9—35.

And it came to pass that night, that the angel of Jehovah went out, and smote* in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000, and cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria;† and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses.‡ So Sennacherib returned with shame of face to his own land, and dwelt at Nineveh.§ And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch, his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons,

* See note p. 197.

† See this whole account as related by Berosus, the Chaldean, apud Whiston, ii. 48. Whiston has collected together all the various predictions relating to this signal overthrow which are to be found in the different prophets, and has then enumerated the historical notices of their literal and exact fulfilment, which are interspersed throughout the Old Testament and Apocrypha, as well as several curious extracts from the writings of numerous ancient writers. Authent. Rec. vol. ii. 858.

‡ And to the house of Judah I will be tenderly merciful:
And I will save them by Jehovah, their God.
And I will not save them by the bow;
Nor by sword, nor by battle;
By horses, nor by horsemen.

Hosea, i. 7. A. CLARKE.

§ This city was the capital of the Assyrian Empire, and most probably founded by Ninus, the son of Nimrod. As to its antiquity, extent, riches, and strength, see Wells's Scrip. Geog. i. 122—125. ii. 146. It was besieged and destroyed by Nabopolassar, in the reign of Josiah. Un. Hist. i. 949. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. ch. 2. The remains or suburbs of it are now called Mosul, on the west bank of the Tigris. Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, p.p. 49. 51. 62. See the fulfilment of the various prophecies relating to this city illustrated in Prid. i. 75. and Keith's Evidence from Prophecy, 251. 255. See also a splendid engraving of the fall of Nineveh by Martin.

smote him with the sword:* and they escaped into the land of Armenia; and Esarhaddon, his son, reigned in his stead. Thus Jehovah saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side. And many brought gifts unto Jehovah to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah, king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.†

And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour; and he made himself treasures for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; storehouses also, for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts; and cotes for flocks. Moreover, he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance, for God had given him substance very much. This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.‡

This well intentioned prince also discovered or republished a portion of the Proverbs of Solomon.§

During his reign, besides Isaiah, the prophets Micah and Hosea flourished.‖

Having reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem, this monarch slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the

* If, according to Tobit, i. 18, this hardened monarch, notwithstanding the signal display of the power of Jehovah, under which he had so lately smarted, immediately on his arrival at Nineveh, persecuted and destroyed all the Jews in his power, we need not wonder that the vengeance of that same Jehovah still pursued him.

† 2 Kings, xix. 35—37. Isaiah, xxxvii. 36—38. 2 Chron. xxxii. 21—23.

‡ 2 Chron. xxxii. 27—30. 2 Kings, xx. 20.

§ Prov. xxv. 1.

‖ Jerem. xxvi. 18. 19. Micah, i. 1. Hosea, i. 1.

chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death; and he was succeeded by his son,*

MANASSEH.

A. C. 710. THIS monarch is constantly referred to, equally as an instance of enormous wickedness, and a signal monument of the grace and mercy of God. His mother's name was Hephzibah, and he began his reign by doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, after the abominations of the heathen, whom Jehovah cast out before the children of Israel. For he built up again the high places which Hezekiah, his father, had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove,† as did Ahab, king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. And he built altars in the house of Jehovah.‡

And he built altars for all the host of heaven, in the two courts of Jehovah. And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger. And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God.§

So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom Jehovah had destroyed before the children of Israel.‖

* 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. 2 Kings, xx. 21.

† It seems pretty generally admitted that the Hebrew word rendered grove, in this and similar places, means Astarte, or an idol of Venus.

‡ 2 Kings, xxi. 1—4. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1—4.

§ 2 Chron. xxxiii. 5—7. 2 Kings, xxi. 5—7.

‖ 2 Kings, xxi. 9. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 9.

And Jehovah spake by his servants, the prophets,* saying, Because Manasseh, king of Judah, hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols. Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel; Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies; because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day. Moreover, Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah.†

Wherefore Jehovah brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns,‡ and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

And when he was in affliction, he besought Jehovah his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that Jehovah

* Namely, Hosea, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Isaiah, which last is said to have been sawn asunder, with a wooden saw, by this monarch's order. A. Clarke.

† 2 Kings, xxi. 10—16. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10. 2 Kings, xxiv. 4.

‡ Josephus says, they caught him by treachery.—"Et vinctum catenis, atque compedibus duxerunt in Babylonem." Vulg.

he was God. Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah. And he took away the strange gods, and the idol* out of the house of Jehovah, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of Jehovah, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city. And he repaired the altar of Jehovah, and sacrificed thereon peace-offerings and thank-offerings, and commanded Judah to serve Jehovah, the God of Israel. Nevertheless, the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto Jehovah, their God only.†

Manasseh reigned fifty-five years, when he slept with his fathers,‡ and was buried in the garden of his own

* See p. 202. † 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11—17.

‡ Jehovah, Almighty God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of their righteous seed, who has made heaven and earth with all the ornament thereof; who has bound the sea by the word of thy commandment; who has shut up the deep, and sealed it by thy terrible and glorious name; whom all men fear, and tremble before thy power; for the majesty of thy glory cannot be borne, and thine angry threatening towards sinners is importable, but thy merciful promise is unmeasurable and unsearchable; for thou art the most high Jehovah, of great compassion, long suffering, very merciful, and repentest of the evils of men. Thou, O Jehovah, according to thy great goodness, hast promised repentance and forgiveness to them that have sinned against thee: and of thine infinite mercies hast appointed repentance unto sinners, that they may be saved. Thou therefore, O Jehovah, that art the God of the just, hast not appointed repentance to the just, as to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, which have not sinned against thee; but thou hast appointed repentance unto me that am a sinner: for I have sinned above the number of the sands of the sea. My transgressions, O Jehovah, are multiplied: my transgressions are multiplied, and I am not worthy to behold and see the height of heaven, for the multitude of mine

house, in the garden of Uzza, and was succeeded by his son,*

AMON.

A. C. 643. THE mother of this prince was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. He did evil in the sight of Jehovah, as did Manasseh, his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh, his father, had made, and served them, and he humbled not himself before Jehovah, as Manasseh, his father, had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more.† And he forsook Jehovah, the God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of Jehovah.‡

Having reigned two years in Jerusalem, his servants con-

iniquities. I am bound down with many iron bands, that I cannot lift up mine head, neither have any release; for I have provoked thy wrath, and done evil before thee. I did not thy will, neither kept I thy commandments: I have set up abominations and have multiplied offences. Now, therefore, I bow the knee of mine heart, beseeching thee of grace. I have sinned, O Jehovah, I have sinned, and I acknowledge mine iniquities: wherefore I humbly beseech thee, forgive me, O Jehovah, forgive me, and destroy me not with mine iniquities. Be not angry with me for ever, by reserving evil for me; neither condemn me into the lower parts of the earth. For thou art the God, even the God of them that repent, and in me thou wilt shew all thy goodness: for thou wilt save me, that am unworthy, according to thy great mercy. Therefore, I will praise thee for ever all the days of my life: for all the powers of heaven do praise thee, and thine is the glory for ever and ever.—Amen. Apocrypha.

We have inserted the above, as it appears both pious and scriptural, (Matt. ix. 13.); but it is not usually considered authentic. Gray's Key, 622. 624.

* 2 Kings, xxi. 1—18. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1—20.

† 2 Chron. xxxiii. 22, 23. 2 Kings xxi. 20, 21.

‡ 2 Kings xxi. 22.

spired against him, and slew him in his palace;* but the mass of the population remaining faithful, they immediately fell upon the conspirators, and slew them, and proclaimed his son Josiah in his stead.† Amon was buried in his sepulchre, in the garden of Uzza.‡

JOSIAH.

A. C. 641. THE mother of this prince was Jedidah, who was herself the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath. He did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah, and walked in the ways of David, his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left.§ For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David, his father.‖

In the twelfth year of his reign, he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem, from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. And they brake

* 2 Kings, xxi. 19—23. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21—24.

† 2 Kings, xxi. 24. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 25.

‡ 2 Kings xxi. 26.

§ "He never swerved from God and truth; he never omitted what he knew to be his duty to God and his kingdom; he carried on his reformation with a steady hand; *timidity* did not prevent him from going *far enough;* and *zeal* did not lead him *beyond due bounds*. He walked in the *golden mean*, and his moderation was known unto all men. He went neither to the right, nor to the left; he looked *inward*, looked *forward*, and looked *upward*. Reader, let the conduct of this pious youth be thy exemplar through life! A. CLARKE. Such was our Edward VI.; and such promised to be Prince Henry, eldest son of James I., and our late lamented Princess Charlotte of Wales.

‖ 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1—3. 2 Kings, xxii. 1, 2.

down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strewed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about.* And when he had broken down the altars, and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.†

In the eighteenth year of his reign, having determined to repair the house of Jehovah, he appointed three of his officers to superintend that work, viz.: Shaphan, Maaseiah, and Joah; and ordered Hilkiah, the high priest, to deliver to them the money, which the Levites had collected from all Judah, and all the remnant of Israel.‡

The pious Bogatzky§ is of opinion that, during many of the preceding reigns, the priests, probably to save themselves the trouble of writing, and the people of reading, the book at large, had furnished themselves with abstracts of the law, leaving out, or slightly mentioning some parts thereof, and particularly the threatenings. Whether this were so or not, it is perfectly clear, that so insensible had these people been to the law of Moses, their great legislator, that when Hilkiah, the priest, whilst emptying the coffers of the temple upon the above occasion, having found a copy of the book of the law of Jehovah, and delivered it to Shaphan, the scribe, it was evidently considered by both of them, a discovery of

* See Schind. 648. b. † 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3—7.
‡ 2 Kings xxii. 3—7. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8—13.
§ Golden Treasury, vol. i. Sept. xii.

sufficient importance, to be immediately communicated to their sovereign.*

That the book found was that portion of the sacred canon, which is denominated the Pentateuch, and which the Jews call Chamisha Chomshi Torah, is clear;† and is by some imagined to have been the original autograph of Moses;‡ and probably the part of it which was read, was a portion of the book of Deuteronomy;§ for when Josiah heard the words of the book of the law, he rent his clothes, and commanded Hilkiah, the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asahiah, to enquire of Jehovah, for their sovereign, for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of the book, which had been found; adding, as it were, in the deepest anguish of soul, and the most intense anxiety, For great is the wrath of Jehovah, that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.‖

The individual to whom the high priest and his coadjutors had recourse, upon this important occasion, was Huldah,

Judah; because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore, my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched. And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of Jehovah, so shall ye say unto him; Thus saith Jehovah, God of Israel, concerning the words which thou hast heard; because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith Jehovah. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace; neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.*

Under the influence of the feelings produced by this awful, though merciful message, Josiah proceeded to celebrate a solemn renewal of the covenant with God, and a dedication of himself and the whole of the people to Jehovah. For having gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem, he went up into the house of Jehovah, and all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant, which was found in the house of Jehovah.

And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before Jehovah, to walk after Jehovah, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all their heart, and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant, that were written in this book. And all

* 2 Chron. xxxiv. 23—28. 2 Kings, xxii. 15—20.

the people stood to the covenant.* And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according† to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

And the king commanded Hilkiah, the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of Jehovah all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them without Jerusalem, in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel. And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places, in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. And he brought out the idol from the house of Jehovah, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people. And he brake down

to pass through the fire to Moloch. And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of Jehovah, by the chamber of Nathan-melech, the chamberlain, which was in the suburbs, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire.* And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of Jehovah, did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption,† which Solomon, the king of Israel, had builded, for Ashtoreth, the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh, the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom, the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.‡ And he brake in pieces the images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men.§

Moreover, the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove. And as Josiah turned him-

* "To receive intimations of future events is the peculiar credulity of the country. For this purpose, a number of milkwhite steeds, unprophaned by mortal labour, is constantly maintained at the public expense; and placed to pasture in the religious groves. When occasion requires, they are harnessed to a sacred chariot (viz. of the sun); and the priest, accompanied by the king, or chief of the state, attends to watch the motions and neighings of the horses." Tac. Germ. ch. 10. and Herodotus, apud Burder, O. L. 609. who also gives a long note from Rosenmuller, Sir William Jones, &c. as to the pagan worship of the sun. See also S. Clarke.

† Mount of Olives. S. Clarke. ‡ See Fuller's Pisgah, pp. 118—123.

§ 2 Kings, xxiii. 4—15. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33.

self, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of Jehovah, which the man of God* proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. Then he said, what title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, who came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that *thou* hast done against the altar of Bethel. And he said, let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet, that came out of Samaria.

And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria,† which the kings of Israel had made to provoke Jehovah to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel. And he slew all the priests of the high places, that were there, upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.‡

Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the

* Namely, the man of God, out of Judah, who was sent to Jeroboam, king of Israel, and who then foretold (340 years before the event) the actual destruction of the idolatrous altars and priests, which Josiah now literally accomplished. And during all that period, the sepulchre, as well of the man of God, as of the old prophet, had been preserved till the days of Josiah, who discerned it by the superscription, but paid honour and respect to his bones, by ordering them to remain undisturbed. Compare 1 Kings, xiii. with 2 Kings, xxiii, and A. Clarke's notes in locis. And see post, in the reign of Jeroboam, king of Israel. Josephus says the prophet's name was Jadon. Vol. ii. 55.

† The kingdom of Israel being now extinct, Josiah, as of the blood royal of Judah, resumed his hereditary rights; and, by the especial commission of God, uprooted idolatry throughout the cities of Samaria. A. Clarke.

‡ 2 Kings, xxiii. 15—20.

wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah, and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book, that Hilkiah, the priest, found in the house of Jehovah. And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to Jehovah with *all* his heart, and with *all* his soul, and with *all* his might, according to *all* the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.*

In the same year also, this monarch celebrated a grand passover at Jerusalem, and commanded all the people, saying; Keep the passover unto Jehovah, your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant;† and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, and the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands, and the Levites slayed them, and they removed the burnt offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto Jehovah, as it is written in the book of Moses. And so did they with the oxen. And they roasted the passover with fire according to the ordinance: but the other holy offerings sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and divided them speedily among all the people. And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: because the priests, the sons of Aaron, were busied in offering of burnt offerings, and the fat until night, therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests, the sons of Aaron. And the singers, the sons of Asaph, were in their places, according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun, the king's seer; and the porters waited at every gate; they might not depart from their service; for their brethren the Levites prepared for them. So all the service of Jehovah was prepared the same day, to

* 2 Kings, xxiii. 24, 25. † 2 Kings, xxiii. 21. Exod. xii. 21—27.

keep the passover, and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of Jehovah, according to the commandment of king Josiah. And the children of Israel that were present kept the passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread, seven days.* And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel, the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.†

Notwithstanding, Jehovah turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him with withal. And Jehovah said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city, Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.‡

And, therefore, after all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho,§ king of Egypt, came up to fight against

* 2 Chron. xxxv. 1—17.

† 2 Chron. xxxv. 18. 2 Kings, xxiii. 22. "There is not the word *such* in the Septuagint, but the passage runs thus: "For *this passover* was not kept from the days of the judges that judged Israel, and all the days of the kings of Israel and kings of Judah; but in the 18th year of king Josiah, there was kept a passover to the Lord in Jerusalem." Dr. Wall,—who seems disposed to infer that the institution of the passover had been wholly neglected since the time of Joshua, except that kept by Hezekiah. See p. 185. But could this solemn institution have been neglected during the reigns of David and Solomon; and yet no censure have been passed on them for such omission? It is remarkable, however, that no mention of its celebration appears throughout a period of 700 years.

‡ 2 Kings, xxiii. 26, 27.

§ "Supposed to be the son of Psammiticus, king of Egypt, who was then proceeding to attack Nabopolassar, king of Assyria." A. Clarke, quoting Herodotus. It is supposed that the tomb of

Carchemish, by Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him. But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste:* forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. Nevertheless, Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God,† and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded. His servants, therefore, took him out of that chariot, and put him into another chariot;‡ and brought him to Jerusalem, where he died.§

this monarch, Pharaoh Necho, was discovered by the indefatigable Belzoni, who has given a most interesting account of it, and which may be seen also in Burder. Belzoni's Researches in Egypt, p. 246. Burder, O. L. No. 610. "It was this same monarch also, whose mariners (according to Herodotus) set out through the Red Sea, and encompassed the whole coast of Africa, and returned through the straits of Gibraltar to Egypt." Bp. Wilson.

* "*My idol* commanded me to make haste; refrain, therefore, from me, and my idol which is with me, that he betray thee not." Targ. apud A. Clarke. This is far more likely to have been the meaning of the Egyptian monarch, than that he had received or spoke the mind of Jehovah. Scott in loco. And Prideaux, i. 82. who discusses the subject at large. "From the time of the restoration of Manasseh, the kings of Judah were homagers to the kings of Babylon. It was on this account that Josiah went to oppose the king of Egypt, who was going against Babylon and Assyria; viz.: in pursuance of his oath of fidelity to the king of Babylon. And as the destruction of Jerusalem was approaching, God in mercy took him away, that he might not see it." Bp. Wilson.

† That is, as Josiah believed, Pharaoh's own idol god, not Jehovah. Bp. Wilson. Sed contra, A. Clarke and S. Clarke.

‡ Or reserved chariot, as is usual with all military commanders or monarchs going to battle. Burder, O. L. No. 638.

§ 2 Kings, xxiii. 29, 30. 2 Chron. xxxv. 20—24. A. Clarke.

In the reign of this monarch flourished the prophet Zephaniah, who, foreseeing the judgments that were coming on his country, thus forewarned his countrymen; "I will utterly consume all things from off the land saith Jehovah. I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumbling blocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith Jehovah. I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims,* with the priests, and them that worship the host of heaven upon the house tops; and them that worship and that swear by Jehovah, and that swear by Malcham;† and them that are turned back from Jehovah; and those that have not sought Jehovah, nor enquired for him. Hold thy peace at the presence of Jehovah, God: for the day of Jehovah is at hand; for Jehovah hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.‡ And it shall come to pass in the day of Jehovah's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel. In the same day, also, will I punish all those that

* "That is, blacks. For the priests of Jeroboam were clothed with black robes, in opposition to the priests at Jerusalem." Br. Wilson. "The black robed priests of different idols. Hence the Jews, in derision, call Christian ministers *Chemarim*, because of their *black clothes* and *garments*. Why we should *imitate* in our *sacerdotal dress*, those priests of Baal, is strange to think, and hard to tell." A. Clarke. Burder, O. L. No. 1097.

† The same as Moloch. Gray's Key. "That is, those who mingle the worship of the true God and idols together. 1 Kings, xviii. 21. Neh. xiii. 24. Rev. iii. 16." S. Clarke. In other words, who carry religion in one hand, and the world in the other.

‡ "That is, the Chaldeans, who were to slay this sacrifice, and feed upon and devour their wealth and substance. Ezek. xxxix. 17. Rev. xix. 17." S. Clarke.

leap* on the threshold, who fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah, that there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish-gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills. Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off. And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their heart, Jehovah will not do good, neither will he do evil. Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof. The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of Jehovah; the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah, and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy; for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land. Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; before

* Zeph. i. 9. Harmer supposes this alludes to the practice of the wild Arabs riding on horseback into the houses of the inhabitants, to prevent which, the doorways are made small and the thresholds high; and that it does not allude to the worship of Dagon, as the Chaldee Paraphrast suggests. Harmer, vol. I. 219. 328.

the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of Jehovah come upon you, before the day of the anger of Jehovah come upon you. Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, who have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the anger of Jehovah."*

The prophet Jeremiah, too, lived during nineteen years under the reign of Josiah; and, therefore, the early part of his prophecy is referable to that period. †

Josiah was buried in his own sepulchre, and was succeeded by his son, Jehoahaz.‡ And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah; and the prophet Jeremiah lamented for him, and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations, and made them an ordinance in Israel:§ and, behold, they are written in the Lamentations.‖

After a short reign of three months, Pharaoh Necho put him in bands* at Riblah, in the land of Hamath; and coming thence to Jerusalem,† he exacted a tribute of an hundred talents of silver‡ and a talent of gold,§ and having placed Eliakim, another son of Josiah, whose name he changed to Jehoiakim, upon the throne; he took Jehoahaz away with him into Egypt, where he died,‖ as Jeremiah, who calls him Shallum, had foretold.

JEHOIAKIM.

A. C. 610. THE first act of this monarch's reign was to tax his subjects, in order to raise and pay the stipulated tribute to Pharaoh. His mother's name was Zebudah, who was the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah; and he did that which was evil¶ in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that his fathers had done.**

The period now approaching when the forbearance of Jehovah towards his favourite people was to cease for a season, he sent them several prophets to forewarn them of the impending ruin.

* "It is conjectured that Jehoahaz raised an army, and met and fought Necho on his return from Carchemish, and was beaten and taken prisoner by that monarch." A. CLARKE.

† Herodotus mentions this circumstance, but gives Jerusalem the name of Cadytis, by which, or some similar appellation, the holy city was known as well among the heathen, as it is by most of the eastern nations at this day. Prid. i. 85. Jahn, i. 152.

‡ £34,218. 15s. § £5,475.

‖ 2 Kings, xxiii. 31—34. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 2. 4. Jer. xxii. 11, 12. See Scott in loco.

¶ Jer. xxii. 13—19.

** 2 Kings, xxiii. 35—37. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5.

Thus Habakkuk, Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously; for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful; their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves:* and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far, they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand. And they scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it.†

Urijah, too, having prophesied against the holy city, and the land of Judea, Jehoiakim, and all his mighty men sought to put him to death, but Urijah fled into Egypt. The king, however, fetched him from thence, and slew him, and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people.‡

But the prophet Jeremiah was the chief instrument employed by God to make known his purposes of judgment and mercy to this infatuated people. Thus saith Jehovah; stand in the court of the house of Jehovah, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the house of Jehovah, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them;

* "Oppian, speaking of the horses bred about the Euphrates, says, 'They are by nature war-horses, and so intrepid, that neither the sight nor the roaring of the lion appals them; and, besides, are astonishingly fleet.'" A. Clarke. Most modern travellers notice the swiftness and courage of the breed of horses, still existing in the vicinity of this river.

† Hab. i. 5—10. ‡ Jer. xxvi. 20—23.

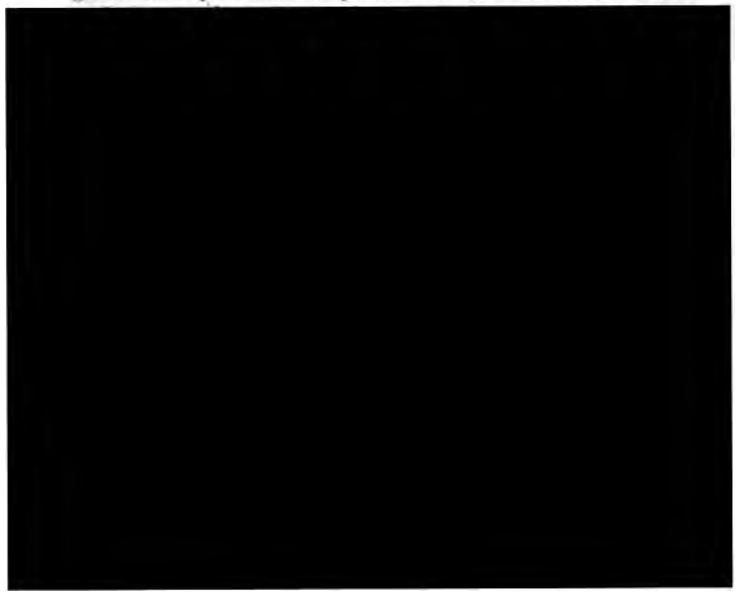
diminish not a word: If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil which I purpose to do unto them, because of the evil of their doings. And thou shalt say unto them, thus saith Jehovah; If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened; then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth. So the priests and the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of Jehovah.*

Upon the delivery of this prophecy, the priests and the prophets apprehended Jeremiah, and brought him before the princes of the people, and formally accused him with a view to procure a sentence of death; but the prophet boldly defended himself and exclaimed, Jehovah sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city, all the words that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah, your God; and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. As for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you. But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth Jehovah hath sent me unto you, to speak all these words in your ears.† Upon which the princes declared that he was not worthy to die, for he had spoken to them in the name of Jehovah, and some of the elders justified their judgment, by the example of Micah, in the reign of Hezekiah. "Did Hezekiah, king of Judah, and all Judah put him at all to death? Did he not fear

* Jer. xxvi. 2—7. † Jer. xxvi. 12—15.

Jehovah, and beseech Jehovah, and Jehovah repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls." But it was probably chiefly owing to the influence of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, under a divine providence, that the life of the prophet was saved.*

About three years after this, another message came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, and which was probably a summary, or recapitulation of all his former denunciations. "From the thirteenth year of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of Jehovah hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened. And Jehovah hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that Jehovah hath given unto you and to your fathers, for ever and ever:



and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones,* and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

And it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith Jehovah, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land, all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves, of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

For thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel unto me; take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee to drink it. And they shall drink and be moved, and be mad, because of the

without their knowledge, and besides their purposes, (Isaiah, x. 5—7. and xlv. 4, 5.) to his own glory; for the correction of some, and advancement of others. Wollaston's MS.

* That is, necessary provisions. S. Clarke. "The sound of the millstones and the light of the candle joined together, because they generally ground the corn *before day* by the light of the candle. Sir J. Chardin remarks, that every where, in the morning, may be heard the *noise of the mills*; for they generally grind *every day* just as much as is necessary for the day's consumption. Where then the *noise of the mill* is not *heard*, nor the *light of the candle seen*, there must be desolation." A. Clarke.

sword, that I will send among them. Then took I the cup* at Jehovah's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom Jehovah had sent me: to wit, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse; as it is this day; Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people; and all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod, Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon, and all the kings of Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the Isles, which are beyond the sea, Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all that are in the utmost corners, and all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert, and all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes, and all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. Therefore thou shalt say unto them, thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel; drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, thus saith Jehovah of hosts; ye shall certainly drink, for lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith Jehovah of Hosts. Therefore, prophesy thou against

* That is, I declared publicly the tribulation that God was about to bring upon Jerusalem, the cities of Judah, and all the nations. A. Clarke.

them all these words, and say unto them, Jehovah shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for Jehovah hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of Jehovah shall be at that day, from one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter, and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flocks to escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, shall be heard: for the Lord hath spoiled their pasture. And the peaceable habitations are cut down, because of the fierce anger of Jehovah. He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion: for their land is desolate, because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger."*

Failing to produce any useful impression upon his rebellious brethren, Jehovah ordered the prophet to have recourse to the memorable instance of the Rechabites' strict obedience, to a mere temporal recommendation of their great progenitor. "Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of Jehovah, into one of the cham-

* Jer. xxv. 3—38.

bers, and give them wine to drink. Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites; and I brought them into the house of Jehovah, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God; who was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door: and I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites, pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, drink ye wine. But they said, we will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers.* Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters: nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither

* "*Ye shall drink no wine.* Ye shall preserve your bodies in temperance; shall use nothing that would deprive you of your sober reason at any time; lest in such an hour ye should do what might be prejudicial to yourselves, injurious to your neighbour, or dishonourable to God. *Neither shall ye build house, &c.* Ye shall not become residents in any place; ye shall not covet wealthy possessions; ye shall live free from ambition and from envy, that ye may be free from contention and strife. *But ye shall dwell in tents.* Ye shall imitate your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the patriarchs, *who dwelt in tents*, being *strangers and pilgrims* upon earth; looking for a heavenly country, and being determined to have nothing here that would indispose their minds towards that place of endless rest, or to prevent them from passing through *temporal* things, so as not to lose those that are *eternal*. There must necessarily be more in these injunctions, than meets the eye in the letter of this account." A. CLARKE.

have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, come, and let us go to Jerusalem, for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem.

Then came the word of Jehovah unto Jeremiah, saying, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; go and tell the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith Jehovah. The words of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me. I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other Gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me. Because the sons of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me: therefore, thus saith Jehovah the God of Hosts, the God of Israel; behold, I will bring upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath

commanded you, therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever."*

* That is, a scribe, whose business it was to occupy themselves in the study of the law. (1 Chron. ii. 55.)—Jer. xxxv. 2—19. The history of this branch of the family of Abraham affords almost as illustrious a fulfilment of prophecy, and consequently of the proof of the Old Testament Scriptures, as those relating to the Jews in general, or to the descendants of Ishmael in particular; but the peculiar interest they are calculated to excite, arises from some late discoveries respecting them.

The house of Rechab descended from Hemath, who is said to have been the father of it, (1 Chron. ii. 55.); but respecting whom we have no other information. Rechab himself is not presented to us under a very favourable aspect, for we only know him, and his brother Baanah, as the assassins of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, whom Abner placed upon the throne of Israel on his father's death, (2 Sam. iv. 2—8.). For this regicidal act, instead of rewarding them as they had anticipated, David ordered them both to be hanged as malefactors. (2 Sam. iv. 9—12.) Their father's name was Rimmon, a Beerothite, of the tribe of Benjamin.

The only mention we have of Jonadab, the son of this Rechab, (as we may suppose) is when he joined himself to Jehu, and united with him in executing the judgments of God upon the house of Ahab, and the prophets of Baal. (2 Kings, x. 15. 17. 23.) And then follows the foregoing remarkable prophecy relating to this family, who were selected by Jehovah himself, as examples of obedience to the commands of a mere wordly progenitor, given almost 300 years before, contrasting it with the universal rebellion and ingratitude of the Jews in general, to the authority of Jehovah himself.

It is not mentioned before, that Jonadab gave any such command; but it is worthy of notice, that he from whom no secrets are hid, and with whom all things are alike from the beginning to the end, not only was aware of the command itself, but of its rigid and conscientious observance; "Go to the house of the Rechabites, and take them into a chamber, and give them wine to drink." (Jer. xxxv. 2.) The prophet obeyed, and placed before them pots of wine and cups to drink out of, and invited them to drink; and as the invitation came from a prophet of God, they might have res-

Besides which God commanded the prophet to take the roll of a book, and write therein all the prophecies that he had uttered from the days of Josiah, mercifully adding, It may be

sonably thought themselves justified in yielding; but they said, "we *will drink* no *wine*," &c.

The ingenious Mr. Harmer* supposes, that the descendants of Abraham had originally lived as the Bedouin Arabs do now; but that some disturbance having taken place between them and some of their kindred tribes, Jonadab had enjoined upon them the abstinence and practices mentioned in the prophecy;—but has the prophecy been fulfilled? the sneering infidel has often enquired—in what quarter of the world it is that Jonadab, the son of Rechab, has a man standing before Jehovah?

Mr. Wolff, the Jewish missionary, thus answers the interesting question. "The Beni-Khaibr (the Jews mentioned by Niebuhr) never came to Jerusalem: they remained in the desert, when Joshua brought the rest of the people of God into the land of promise; and thus they dwell in the desert, near Mecca, without any knowledge of the law or the prophets; wandering about as robbers and enemies of mankind. They call themselves Beni Moshe, the children of Moses." (Journal i. 257) Rabbi Mose Secot, at Jerusalem, told him that these Beni-Khaibr came to Jerusalem, in the time of Jeremiah, and were the descendants of the Rechabites; that they still drink no wine, and have neither vineyard, nor field, nor seed, but dwell like Arabs. He considered them as descended from Jethro. Journal, i. 257. 260, 261. This account was further confirmed by Abraham Ben-Yahya, from Yerim, near Sanaa, in the land of Teman, viz: Yemen, with whom Mr. Wolff met at Ispahan, and who told him, The Jews Khaibr are the children of Rechab—these are mighty men and have not felt the yoke of the captivity, and then Abraham Ben-Yahya, joyfully lifted up his fingers, and moved them about, and said, They are the descendants of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, who said, ye shall drink no wine, neither ye nor your sons, for ever; neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, &c. And thus they do—the children of Ishmael curse them, and we bless them—the sword of Muhammed has not brought them under his yoke. Soleiman Hadorame went among them, and they told him, that if the Jews shall begin to repent—if they shall pray with devo-

* Observations, vol. 1. 266.

that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them: that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their

tion, then the Messiah will come. Soleiman Hadorame has seen them! Journal, ii. 17. Again, when at Moussul (the ancient Nineveh or thereabouts) he says, All the Jews in this country believe that the Beni-Khaibr, near Mecca and Medinah, are the descendants of the ancient Rechabites. The Mufti from Merdeen, gave me a long description of the Beni-Khaibr, but as I have not yet seen them, I will not at present give you his description of them; they are, however, worthy of notice. Those Jews of Khaibr gave infinite trouble to Muhammed, and he never was able to compel them to embrace his religion. (See Sale's note to chapter xlviii. in the Koran, and Herbelot's Bibliotheque Orientale). Journal, iii. 276, 277. When at Bassora, a Jew, Mose-Yehuda, who was born at Sanaa, in Yemen, told him that the Jews of Sanaa are firmly convinced that the Beni-Khaibr are the descendants of the ancient Rechabites; their existence, therefore, is beyond all doubt. He told him that there were Jews at Hazarmaveth, (Genesis, x. 26.) which is called Hadramawth, in Arabic. The Jews at Sanaa speak Arabic, and biblical Hebrew. They do not read the Talmud much, but very frequently the Sohar of Rabbi Simeon Bar-Yohai. They have three courts of law, called Beth-Din; for the Jews in cases of dispute never appeal to the Turkish Governor, except an Arab is convened in it. He asked him whether it was true, that the Jews at Sanaa sometimes use the prayers contained in the Koran? God forbid, such a thing never was done in Israel! was his answer. He told him that the Jews at Sanaa might easily procure him access to the Rechabites, who were only eight days distant from them; he observed that the Jews would bring him thither with a subtlety like that with which Jacob deceived Isaac, his father. Journal, iii. 331. There are Jews at Atana, near the city of Mecca; all the Jews in Yemen are dressed like Arabs, but of black colour: and the following fact was told him by the Jew called Mose Yehuda. Rabbi Gad, of Jerusalem, set off 39 years ago with a caravan, from Mokka to Sanaa; the Arabs comprising the caravan were then at war with the Rechabites, (Beni-Khaibr.) The Rechabites attacked the caravan and destroyed them. Rabbi Gad in his anguish used the exclamation common among the Jews,

sin. Then Jeremiah called Baruch, the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah, all the words of Jehovah, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.

viz; "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." The chief of the Rechabites hearing it, gave orders to stop the massacre. Rabbi Gad was brought to their tents, and questioned; they asked him how matters stood at Jerusalem, whether Israel *still sinned*, and whether the *temple* was *not yet* built? They dismissed Gad with presents, and brought him in safety to Sanaa. Journal. iii. 333. "Mose Yehudah, the Jew from Sanaa, called on me, and read the whole morning in the Gospel of St. John. He asked me the meaning of John iii. 7, 8. and observed that the Jews at Sanaa, know very little of the circumstances of the death of Jesus Christ." Journal iii. 334. "As well the Jews, not only of Jerusalem, but likewise those of Yemen, told me that the Rechabites mentioned in Jer. xxxv. were still existing around Mecca; the Mussulmans who performed their pilgrimages to Mecca, confirmed that account; the latter knew them by the names of Khaibaree. On my arrival at Jalooha, in Mesopotamia, I saw Jews wandering about among the Yezidi. I asked them, has never any one of you turned Yezidi or Mussulman? They replied, "Oppression cannot bow us, and tyranny not shake, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God!" I added "and Jesus of Nazareth is the son of God!" And believing them to be Rechabites, on account of their wandering about in the desert, I asked them the question, they replied "no, but here is one who came from Hajaz, viz; the deserts of Mecca!" I saw one before me standing, dressed and wild like an Arab, the bridle of his horse holding in his hand, I shewed to him the Bible in Hebrew, and Arabic; he read both languages and was rejoiced to see the Bible, he was not acquainted with the New Testament. After having proclaimed to him the tidings of salvation, and made him a present of the Hebrew and Arabic Bibles and Testaments, I asked him, whose descendants are you?

Mousa. (This was his name, with a loud voice.) Come I shew to you, and then he began to read Jeremiah xxxv. from verse 5 to 11.

W. Where do you reside.

Mousa. (Recurring to Gen. x. 27.) At Hadoram, now called Samar by the Arabs, at Usal, now called Sanaa by the Arabs, and (Genesis x. 30.) at Mesha, now called Mecca, in the deserts around

And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am shut up; I cannot go into the house of Jehovah: therefore, go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of Jehovah, in the ears of the people in the house of Jehovah, upon the fasting day: and also, thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah, that come out of their cities. It may be, they will present their supplication before Jehovah, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that Jehovah hath pronounced against this people. And Baruch, the son of Neriah, did according to all that Jeremiah, the prophet, commanded him, reading in the book the words of Jehovah, in the house of Jehovah.*

The king of Egypt, however, came no more out of his land, for Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, having beaten his army at the Euphrates, and retaken Carchemish,† possessed himself from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates, of all that pertained to that monarch.‡

those places. We drink no wine, and plant no vineyard, and sow no seed, and live in tents, as Jonadab our father commanded us. Hobab was our father too; come to us, you will still find 60,000 in number, and you see thus the prophecy has been fulfilled. "Therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." And saying this, Mousa, the Rechabite, mounted his horse and fled away, and left behind a host of evidence of sacred writ! Journal iii, 334. 336. The number of the Beni-Khaibr are said to amount to 60,000. KEITH, 356.

* Jer. xxxvi. 3—8.

† See a sublime prophecy of this event in Jer. xlvi. Nothing can shew more how prone is the fallen nature of man, to trust in an arm of flesh, (2 Chron. xxxii. 8. Jer. xvii. 5.), than the conduct of the Jews with reference to the kings of Egypt; for it appears from hence, that they were not yet weaned from their false confidence in that power, notwithstanding the prophetical warnings they had received in the time of Hezekiah. 2 Kings, xviii. 21. Isaiah, xxxvi. 6.

‡ 2 Kings, xxiv. 7.

The Babylonian then proceeded to besiege Jerusalem, against Jehoiakim, as an ally of Pharoah Necho; and having taken him prisoner, bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon.*

It appears uncertain whether Nebuchadnezzar released Jehoiakim before he quitted Jerusalem, or whether he took him with him to Babylon, and afterwards restored him.†

However that may be, the Babylonish monarch seized part of the vessels of the house of God, and sent them into the land of Shinar, and placed them into the treasure house of his god,‡ Bel, at Babylon. He also ordered Ashpenaz, his eunuch, to take some of the most considerable persons in the kingdom, and amongst the rest, Daniel and his companions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,§ to carry them captive into Babylon.

Jehoiakim governed Jerusalem, as a tributary to the king of Babylon, for three years; during which period, both king and people exhibiting no symptoms of reformation, Jehovah still continued to repeat his messages of wrath and mercy by the prophet Jeremiah.‖

On the return of the fast, therefore, in the following year, Baruch read the roll a second time,¶ in the chamber of Ge-

* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6. 2 Kings, xxiv. 1. Dan. i. 1.

† 2 Kings, xxiv. 1. Scott in loco, and in Jer. xlvi. 2. A. Clarke. Prid. i. 91. Dr. Wall, i. 270,

‡ Dan. i. 2. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7.

§ Dan. i. 3—7. ‖ 2 Kings, xxiv. 1.

¶ "In making the roll to be read twice in the temple by Baruch, I confess I differ from most that have commented upon this place of Scripture. But as the reading of the roll by Baruch is, in the 36th chapter of Jeremiah, twice related, so it is plain to me that it was twice done; for in the first relation it is said to be done in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and in the second it is said to be done in the fifth; which plainly denotes two different times. And in the first relation Jeremiah is said to be shut up in prison when the roll

mariah, in the higher court at the entry of the new gate of Jehovah's house, in the ears of all the people.

Michaiah, the son of Gemariah, being present, went immediately and repeated what he had heard to the princes who were sitting in the scribe's chamber, who dispatched Jehudi to Baruch, with orders to bring the roll to them. Baruch having repeated the prophecies in their hearing, they were afraid, and said to Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words; and upon being informed that Jeremiah had dictated the contents of the roll, said, Go hide thee, thou, and Jeremiah, and let no man know where ye be.

As soon as Jehoiakim had received information of the circumstance, he dispatched Jehudi to fetch the roll, who having brought it out of the chamber of Elishama, the scribe, began to read it before the king and his princes; but had not read more than three or four columns when Jehoiakim cut the roll with a penknife, and cast it into a fire that was burning before him on the hearth, and it was entirely consumed.* This was done in spite of the remonstrances and intreaties of Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah; but he would not hear them, nor were he nor his servants afraid; neither did they rend their garments. So true is the maxim even of an heathen—"Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat." And so infatuated was the ill-fated monarch, that he com-

was read; but in the second relation it plainly appears he was out of prison; for he was then at full liberty to go out of the way and hide himself. For these reasons I take it for certain that the roll was twice read: and I have Abp. Usher with me in the same opinion, whose judgment must always be of the greatest weight in such matters." Prid. i. 95.

* "The Jews preserve a melancholy memorial of this criminal transaction, by keeping a solemn fast, every year, on the 29th day of Cisleu, which answers to our November. Prid. i. 95.

manded both Baruch and Jeremiah to be apprehended; but Jehovah hid them.*

It was probably upon this occasion that Jeremiah was commanded to encourage the timid scribe by the following declaration: Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch; Thou didst say, woe is me now! for Jehovah hath added grief to my sorrow. I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest. Thus shalt thou say unto him, Jehovah saith thus; Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith Jehovah: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey, in all places whither thou goest.†

Such an act of atrocious insolence to the majesty of heaven, as that perpetrated by Jehoiakim, might well have drawn down the instantaneous wrath of God: but so great was his forbearance, and so unwilling was he to inflict his own judgments, that he afforded that wretched prince, even yet another opportunity of repentance. For the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, hath burned. And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Thus saith Jehovah; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, concerning Jehoiakim, king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him, and his seed, and his servants, for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants, and upon

* Jer. xxxvi. 9—26. † Jer. xlv. 2—5.

the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them. So Baruch wrote in another roll, from the mouth of Jeremiah, all the words of the book which Jehoiakim had burned in the fire; and there were added besides unto them many like words; but they hearkened not.*

At the end of three years, Jehoiakim having rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, Jehovah sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon; and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of Jehovah, which he spake by his servants, the prophets.†

Whether this monarch was carried to Babylon does not positively appear;‡ but the sacred historian adds that he slept§ with his fathers, and was succeeded by his son,‖ Jehoiachin.

* Jer. xxxvi. 27—32. † 2 Kings, xxiv. 1, 2.

‡ See p. 233.

§ The prophet Jeremiah had foretold of this prince, that they should not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they should not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory; but that he should be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem. Jer. xxii. 18, 19. And again: His dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. Jer. xxxvi. 30. The author of the book of Kings does not notice this circumstance, or state any particular occurrence as to his burial; but Josephus says that Jehoiakim was thrown before the walls, by command of Nebuchadnezzar, without any burial. Josephus, ii. 59. Prideaux, without giving any authority, alleges the prophecy was literally accomplished. Prid. i. 98. Probably Jehoiakim held out against the Babylonish forces till the eleventh year of his reign; and while yet unburied, the Chaldeans dragged the dead body of the perjured monarch before the city, and suffered it to lie there unburied, as Jeremiah had predicted. Jahn, i. 154. "To *sleep with one's fathers*, is used as a common expression to express simply the act of *dying*; although it be a violent death." Dr. Wall. "Not that he was *buried* with his fathers, for he died in the way, as they led him prisoner toward Babylon." Barker, 1598.

‖ 2 Kings, xxiv. 6.

JEHOIACHIN.

A. C. 509. This prince, who is also called Jeconiah* and Coniah,† was only eighteen years old when he began to reign, and his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

Having done that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that his father had done, the prophet Jeremiah denounced a woful judgment upon him: Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages: for all thy lovers are destroyed. I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear. This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice! The wind shall eat up all thy pastors, and thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness. O inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a woman in travail! As I live, saith Jehovah, though Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and into the hands of the Chaldeans. And I will cast thee out, and *thy mother* that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return. Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? Is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? Wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth,

*Jer. xxiv. 1. xxvii. 20. xxviii. 4. † Jer. xxxvii. 1.

earth, earth, hear the word of Jehovah! Thus saith Jehovah, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.*

This was accordingly fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar coming against Jerusalem and besieging it, when Jehoiachin went out to meet him, with *his mother*, servants, princes, and officers; whereupon Nebuchadnezzar took him prisoner, after he had reigned only three months, and sent him to Babylon, where he was imprisoned.†

At the same time, the Babylonian seized upon all the treasures of the house of Jehovah, and the treasures of the king's house; and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold, which Solomon, king of Israel, had made in the temple of Jehovah, as Jehovah had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away to Babylon the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to

* Jer. xxii. 20—30. Prid. i. 98. Scott in loco.

† 2 Kings, xxiv. 10—12. 15. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10. By thus yielding himself up to the will of God, as declared by Jeremiah, he not only preserved his life, but, as we shall afterwards see, obtained a renewal of comfort and even honour. BARKER. In 2 Chron. xxxvi. 8. allusion is made to *that which was found upon him*; upon which the note in Barker's Bible is, "He meaneth superstitious marks, which were found upon his body after he was dead; which thing declared how deeply idolatry was rooted in his heart, seeing he bore the marks in his flesh."

Babylon;* besides 3,023 whom he had carried away the year before.†

Besides the illustrious Jews who were already hanging their harps upon the willows by the rivers of Babylon,‡ the prophet Ezekiel was most probably carried into captivity at this period: God in his mercy thereby providing an instrument for the comfort and encouragement of his smitten,§ but not forsaken people, in his own good time.‖

ZEDEKIAH.

A.C. 599. HAVING dethroned Jehoiachin, and sent him into captivity, Nebuchadnezzar placed his uncle Mattaniah upon the vacant throne, and changed his name to Zedekiah, leaving him, however, but little power, and treating him rather as his vassal or lieutenant, than an independent sovereign. And he did evil in the sight of Jehovah, according to all that Jehoiachin had done.¶

* 2 Kings, xxiv. 13—16. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10. Dr. Wall, i. 271.

† Jer. lii. 28. Prid. i. 99.

‡ Ps. cxxxvii. 1. § Isaiah, lx. 10.

‖ Ezek. xl. 1. Prid. i. 99.

¶ 2 Kings, xxiv. 17—19. Jer. lii. 1, 2. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12. "Was there ever such a set of weak, infatuated men as the Jewish kings in general! They had the fullest evidence that they were only *deputies* to Almighty God, and that they could not expect to retain the throne any longer than they were faithful to their Lord; and yet with all this conviction, they lived wickedly, and endeavoured to establish *idolatry* in the place of the worship of their maker! After bearing with them long, the divine mercy gave them up, as their case was utterly hopeless. *They sinned till there was no remedy.*" A. CLARKE. There is but too much reason to fear, that too many parallels are to be found, even amongst christian dynasties. And those who have

The vision of the two baskets of figs, therefore, was shewn to Jeremiah; one of good, and the other of evil figs. Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel; like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place, into the land of the Chaldeans for their good. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am Jehovah, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

And as the evil figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil, surely thus saith Jehovah, so will I give Zedekiah, the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt: and I will deliver them to be removed, into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them, and to their fathers.*

Early in the reign of Zedekiah, and probably not long after the departure of Jehoiachin and his queen, with the eunuchs, princes, and mechanics; Jeremiah sent a letter by Elasah, the son of Shaphan, to his captive brethren for their encouragement, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Ba-

attentively read the histories, of the vices of the royal family of France, for continuous centuries, will not wonder that they were visited with such horrors at the late revolution, but rather that the judgments of God did not fall upon them sooner. Jer. xxxvii. 10.

* Jer. xxiv. 5—10.

bylon; build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;* take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished. And seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto Jehovah for it: for in the peace thereof, shall ye have peace.

For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets, and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith Jehovah.

For thus saith Jehovah, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith Jehovah, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith Jehovah: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith Jehovah: and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

Because ye have said, Jehovah hath raised us up prophets in Babylon; know that thus saith Jehovah, concerning† the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and concerning

* "This shews that the Jews were not made slaves, but were esteemed, and made a colony to plant the then enlarged city of Babylon, where they had houses and lands, and their own servants, and their own laws." Bp. Wilson.

† Blayney, Buxtorf.

all the people that dwelleth in this city, and concerning your brethren, that are not gone forth with you into captivity; thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence; and I will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach among all the nations whither I have driven them: because they have not hearkened to my words, saith Jehovah, which I sent unto them by my servants, the prophets, rising up early and sending them: but ye would not hear, saith Jehovah.

Hear ye, therefore, the word of Jehovah, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon: thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab, the son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah, the son of Maaseiah, who prophesy a lie unto you in my name: behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes: and of them shall be taken up a curse, by all the captivity of Judah, which are in Babylon, saying, Jehovah make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire;* because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and am a witness, saith Jehovah.

* "The Jews who were carried away captives with Jehoiachin, being discouraged from settling and making improvements in the land of the captivity by their false prophets, Jeremiah wrote this prophecy to undeceive them. And Nebuchadnezzar himself, finding that these false prophets discouraged the people, ordered them to be roasted to death, according to this very prophecy." Br. Wilson.

Thus shalt thou also speak to Shemaiah, the Nehelamite, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thy name, unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, the priest, and to all the priests, saying, Jehovah hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada, the priest, that ye should be officers in the house of Jehovah, for every man that is mad and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest put him in prison, and in the stocks. Now, therefore, why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, who maketh himself a prophet to you? For therefore he sent unto us in Babylon, saying, This captivity is long: build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And Zephaniah, the priest, read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah, the prophet.

Then came the word of Jehovah unto Jeremiah, saying, Send to all them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, concerning Shemaiah, the Nehelamite; because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie: therefore, thus saith Jehovah; behold, I will punish Shemaiah, the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among his people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith Jehovah; because he hath taught rebellion against Jehovah.*

About the fourth year of the reign of this prince, but the exact period or occasion is not quite evident, he appears to have discovered some disposition to shake off the authority of the Babylonian, upon which Jeremiah admonished him, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. Why

* Jer. xxix. 4—32.

will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as Jehovah hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? Therefore, hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you. For I have not sent them, saith Jehovah, yet they prophesy a lie in my name: that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you.

Also, I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith Jehovah; hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, behold, the vessels of Jehovah's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you. Hearken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should this city be laid waste? But if they be prophets, and if the word of Jehovah be with them, let them now make intercession to Jehovah of Hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of Jehovah, and in the house of the king of Judah, and Jerusalem, go not to Babylon.

For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city, which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took not when he carried away captive Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem: yea, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain in the house of Jehovah, and in the house of the king of Judah, and of Jerusalem; they shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith Jehovah: then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.*

* Jer. xxvii. 12—22.

Hananiah, a wicked prophet, having taunted Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the house of Jehovah, that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon; and I will bring again to this place Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith Jehovah: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon;* the man of God replied, with a hearty Amen, Jehovah do so: Jehovah, perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of Jehovah's house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place! Nevertheless, hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people; the prophets that have been before me and before thee of old, prophesied both against many countries and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that Jehovah hath truly sent him.†

Then Hananiah, the prophet, took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith Jehovah; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, king of

* Jer. xxviii. 1—4.

† "That is, *You* say that Nebuchadnezzar shall not overthrow this city; and that, in *two years* from this time, not only the sacred vessels *already taken away* shall be restored, but also that *Jeconiah*, and *all the Jewish captives*, shall be restored, and the *Babylonish yoke* broken, see v. 2—4. Now *I* say, that Nebuchadnezzar will come *this year*, and destroy this city, and lead away the rest of the people into captivity, and the rest of the sacred vessels; and that there will be no restoration of any kind till *seventy* years from this time." A. Clarke.

Babylon, from the neck of all nations, within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

Then the word of Jehovah came unto Jeremiah, the prophet, after that Hananiah, the prophet, had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also.

Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah, the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; Jehovah hath not sent thee, but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore, thus saith Jehovah; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against Jehovah. So Hananiah, the prophet, died the same year, in the seventh month.* And the probability is, that this solemn judgment of God, upon the lying prophet, restrained the rebellious feeling of Zedekiah for that period.†

In the fifth year of the captivity of Jehoiakim, and consequently of the reign of Zedekiah, the vision of the four cherubims and the four wheels was revealed to the prophet Ezekiel at Babylon;‡ and the recapitulation of his forbearance with the houses of Israel and Judah;§ and the chambers of imagery;‖ concluding, however, with an encouraging

* Jer. xxviii. 5—17. "That is, within two months; and the death of Hananiah thus predicted, was God's *seal* to the words of *his* prophet, and ought to have gained great credit to that prophet's prediction among the people." A. Clarke. Bp. Wilson.

† Prid. i. 101. ‡ Ezek. i. ii. iii.

§ Ezek. iv. v. vi. vii. ‖ Ezek. viii. ix. x. xi.

promise: Thus saith Jehovah, God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. Therefore say, thus saith Jehovah, God; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the destestable things thereof, and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: that they may walk in my statutes, and keep my ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith Jehovah, God. Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of Jehovah went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city. Then I spake unto them of the captivity, of all the things that Jehovah had shewed me.*

In the seventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, God still revealed his further purposes of judgment and mercy to the same prophet.†

Through the anger of Jehovah, it came to pass that this prince rebelled against the king of Babylon:‡ upon which a further denunciation against him was revealed to Ezekiel; Say now to the rebellious house; know ye not what these things mean? Tell them, behold, the king of Babylon is

* Ezek. xi. 16—25. † Ezek. xii—xix.
‡ 2 Kings, xxiv. 20. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Jer. lii. 3.

come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon; and hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land: that the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand. But he rebelled against him, in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? Shall he escape that doeth such things? Or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered? As I live, saith Jehovah, God, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons: seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, God; as I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head. And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass, that he hath trespassed against me. And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I Jehovah have spoken it.*

But not only did Zedekiah stiffen his neck and harden his heart from turning unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, but all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much, after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the

* Ezek. xvii. 12—21.

house of Jehovah, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And Jehovah, the God of their fathers, sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of Jehovah arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*

In the ninth year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar marched with a large army to punish Zedekiah's rebellion,† and having been directed by lot to proceed against Jerusalem, rather than the Ammonites, who had also entered into the same conspiracy,‡ he besieged that devoted city in form.

At the commencement of the siege, the final result was revealed to Ezekiel, by the type of a boiling pot, and the death of his wife, the desire of his eyes.§

The siege had proceeded about a year, and the city was closely invested, when Jehovah sent Jeremiah to Zedekiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, thus saith Jehovah; behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire: and thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee

* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13—16.

† 2 Kings, xxv. 1. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17. Jer. lii. 4.

‡ The lot was thus, they wrote on several arrows the names of the cities they intended to make war against, and then putting them promiscuously all together into a quiver, that city whose name was on the arrow first drawn, was the first they assaulted. Prid. i. 108. May we not draw an inference from Ezek. xxiv. 18—24., that God has frequently controlled the heathen oracles and superstitions, to superinduce his own purposes?

§ Ezek. xxiv.

mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon.* Yet hear the word of Jehovah, O Zedekiah, king of Judah; thus saith Jehovah concerning thee, thou shalt not die by the sword: but thou shalt die in peace: and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shall they burn odours† for thee; and they will lament thee, saying, Ah, lord!‡

This message so provoked Zedekiah, that he shut up the prophet in the court of the prison, which was in the palace.§

During the prophet's confinement he purchased of his uncle Hanameel, by the direction of God, a field situate in Anathoth for seventeen shekels of silver, by way of encouragement to believe in the prophecies of restoration, as well as those for destruction.‖ And upon that occasion he offered up the following beautiful prayer: Ah, Jehovah, God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee: thou shewest lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the great, the mighty God, Jehovah of Hosts, is his name, great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto this day, and in Israel, and among men; and hast made thee a name, as it is this day; and hast brought forth thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with great terror; and hast given them this land, which thou didst

* See the accurate, and very extraordinary fulfilment of this prophecy, fully established against the infidel Paine, by David Levi.—Letters, p. 186.

† 2 Chron. xvi. 14. ‡ Jer. xxxiv. 2—5.

§ Jer. xxxii. 2. Prid. i. 109. ‖ Jer. xxxii. 6—15.

swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; and they came in, and possessed it; but they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing of all that thou commandest them to do; therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them: behold the mounts,* they are come unto the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence, and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou hast said unto me, O Jehovah, God, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses: for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.†

To this pathetic supplication, Jehovah was pleased to return a very gracious and encouraging answer: Behold, I am Jehovah, the God of all flesh: Is there any thing too hard for me? Therefore, thus saith Jehovah; Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and he shall take it: and the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come and set fire on this city, and burn it, with the houses upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger. For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith Jehovah. For this city hath been to me as a provocation of mine anger and of my fury, from the day that they built it even unto this day, that I should remove it from before my face; because of all the evil of the children of Israel, and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their

* Engines used in a siege. Burder, O. L. No. 977.

† Jer. xxxii. 17—25.

priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And they have turned unto me the back and not the face:* though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. But they set their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

And now, therefore, thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God:* and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; But I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul. For thus saith Jehovah; like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And fields shall be bought in this land,

* Those who ridicule the idea of a literal, or at least national restoration of the Jews, should inform us when this prophecy has been fulfilled.

whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith Jehovah.*

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. For thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of thek ings of Judah, which are thrown down by the mounts, and by the sword; they come to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city. Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth: and I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel† to return, and will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness, and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it. Thus saith Jehovah; again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say shall be desolate

* Jer. xxxii. 27—44.

† "This must respect the latter times, for the *ten tribes* did not return with the Jews, at the termination of the *seventy* years." A. Clarke.

without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man, and without inhabitants, and without beast, the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, praise Jehovah of Hosts: for Jehovah is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise* into the house of Jehovah. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith Jehovah.

Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds, causing their flocks to lie down. In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again† under the hands of him that telleth them, saith Jehovah.

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. For thus saith Jehovah; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.

Thus saith Jehovah; if ye can break my covenant of the

* See this fulfilled. Ezra, iii. 11.

† That is, for the purpose of paying tribute or custom, and thus denoting the prosperity of a regular government. Burder, O. C. 772.

day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David, my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites, the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David, my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.

Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, the two families which Jehovah hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? Thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.

Thus saith Jehovah; if my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David, my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.*

Notwithstanding the displeasure of Zedekiah, this prophetic denunciation, however, and the pressure of the siege, appear to have produced a transitory effect upon the sovereign and his people; for he made a covenant with them to proclaim liberty unto them;† that every man should let his man servant, and every man his maid servant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother. Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his man servant, and every one his maid servant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more, then they obeyed, and let them go.‡

* Jer. xxxiii. 3—26.

† Exod. xxi. 2. Deut. xv. 12. ‡ Jer. xxxiv. 8—10.

Pharaoh, king of Egypt,* having marched out of his own territories with a large army, in order to relieve Jerusalem; Nebuchadnezzar raised the siege,† and proceeded towards the Egyptians, having first, however, sent all the Jewish captives already taken, to the number of 832, to Babylon.‡

Upon the departure of the Chaldean army, Jeremiah seems to have been set at liberty,§ and Zedekiah, naturally desirous of knowing what would be the result of the expected conflict between the Babylonish and Egyptian monarchs, sent Jehucal and Zephaniah to Jeremiah, saying, pray now unto Jehovah, our God, for us.‖

To this message the prophet was directed to reply: Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me to enquire of me, behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land. And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire.

Thus saith Jehovah; Deceive not yourselves, saying, the Chaldeans shall surely depart from us, for they shall not depart. *For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but*

* "Pharaoh Hophra, *Apries*, or *Vaphris*, who had succeeded his father Necho." A. Clarke. It is said of him, that after he had reigned twenty years in great prosperity, he grew so insolent as to say, that it was not in the power of God to dispossess him of his kingdom. Herodot. He also boasted "The river is mine, and I have made it." Ezek. xxix. 9. "Hophra was given up and destroyed on account of his perfidy to Zedekiah, whose cause he had deserted; and left him to be taken by Nebuchadnezzar, after he had induced Zedekiah to enter into a confederacy with him, contrary to his oath to the king of Babylon. So that God revenged the breach of both their oaths upon these two kings." Bp. Wilson.

† Jer. xxxvii. 5.

‡ Jer. lii. 29. § Jer. xxxvii. 4. ‖ Jer. xxxvii. 3.

*wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.**

So far, however, from believing this report, or seeking to avert it by humiliation, they chose to take it for granted that they should see no more of the Chaldean army, and as if repenting of the apparent and partial contrition they had shewn, they immediately reduced those servants, whom they had set free in the hour of danger, again into subjection, and reclaimed them for servants and handmaids.†

Wherefore, God instantly denounced a still severer message by the same prophet; Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel; I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying, at the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother, an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear. And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name: but ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. Therefore, thus saith Jehovah; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, *I proclaim a liberty for you, saith Jehovah, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine,* and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of

* Jer. xxxvii. 7—10. "Strong words! but they shew how fully God was determined to give up this city to fire and sword; and how fully he had instructed his prophet in this point." A. CLARKE.

† Jer. xxxiv. 11.

the earth. And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before me, when they cut the calf in twain,* and passed between the parts thereof, the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf; I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. And Zedekiah, king of Judah, and his princes, will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you. Behold, I will command, saith Jehovah, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant.†

Jeremiah, fully confident of the eventful result, prepared to quit the city, and retire into the land of Benjamin; but as he passed through the gate of that name, he was seized by Irijah, the captain of the ward, as a deserter, and taken before the princes; who, notwithstanding his solemn asseveration of innocence, smote him, and cast him into a dungeon in the house of Jonathan, the scribe.‡

* "This was the ancient and most solemn way of making a covenant. 1. A calf, as sacrifice, was offered to God to secure his approbation and support. 2. The *victim* was then *exactly divided* from the nose to the rump; the spinal marrow being divided longitudinally, in the most careful manner, that the *half* of it might remain on *each side*. 3. The divided parts were laid opposite to each other, a passage being left between them. 4. The contracting parties entered this passage at each end, met in the middle, and there took the covenant oath; adjudging themselves to death should they break this covenant. 5. Then they both feasted on the victim." A. Clarke, on Gen. xv. 17, and Jer. xxxiv. 18. Dr. Wall. Burder, O. C. 774.

† Jer. xxxiv. 13—22. ‡ Jer. xxxvii. 11—16.

The Egyptian army having retired before Nebuchadnezzar,† that monarch soon returned, and resumed the

† Jer. xxxvii. 7. Prid. i. 110. It would seem that the dealings of God with the nation of the Jews, were by no means intended for their own benefit alone, but in order to exhibit, as it were, a grand epitome of his providence and government towards the vast family of man. And the more closely his proceedings are examined and scrutinized, the more equitable his government will appear, although not unfrequently those proceedings are veiled in mysteries, which the feeble comprehension of finite beings cannot fully penetrate. Thus when Zedekiah sent some of the priests to enquire of Jeremiah, and pray unto Jehovah, his God, for them; in this trying crisis, when the Chaldeans, who were besieging the city, had set out to intercept the Egyptian forces, who were coming to his relief; Jehovah directed the prophet to declare, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me to enquire of me; Behold! Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land. And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire. Jer. xxxvii. 7, 8. Nothing can appear more distinctly a preordained purpose of God, than this transaction; and accordingly Pharaoh and his army retired before the Chaldeans, and left them at liberty to resume the siege of Jerusalem, which they destroyed. Still, for this very desertion of his ancient people, in the time of their greatest need, was the prophet Ezekiel commissioned to pronounce a prophetical judgment upon the whole Egyptian nation, which has been fulfilling almost from that day to this, and under the pressure of which all Mizraim still groans. Ezek. xxix. 2. 7. xxx. xxxi. xxxii. These judgments were executed both upon king and people, during forty years of war, confusion, and desolation; and not long after the expiration of that period, they were made a province of the Persian empire, and have been governed by strangers ever since; for on the failure of the Persian empire, they became subject to the Macedonians, and after them to the Romans; subsequently to the Saracens, then to the Mamalukes, and are at present a province of the Turkish empire, and probably very soon are likely to fall under the dominion of Mehemed Ali, who seems to be only waiting for a convenient opportunity to declare himself independent. Prid. i. 111. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." Isaiah, lx. 12.

siege;* when Zedekiah, whose mind seems all along to have misgiven him, sent for Jeremiah to his palace secretly, and asked him, Is there any word from Jehovah? To which the prophet replied, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.

Moreover, Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, what have I offended against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison? Where are now your prophets, which prophesied unto you, saying, the king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land? Therefore, hear now, I pray thee, O my lord the king: let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan, the scribe, lest I die there.†

Moved by this earnest supplication, Zedekiah commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread, out of the baker's street, until all the bread of the city was spent.‡

The siege proceeding, and finding his resources gradually cut off, the disquieted monarch sent Pashur and Zephaniah, and Maaseiah, the priest, unto Jeremiah, to enquire of Jehovah, whether he would deal with his people according to all his wonderous works, that Nebuchadnezzar might go up from them.§ To which Jeremiah, by command of Jehovah, replied, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel; behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them into the midst of this city. And I myself will fight against you with an out-stretched hand, and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. And afterwards,

* Jer. xxxvii. 8. Prid. i. 111. † Jer. xxxvii. 17—20.
‡ Jer. xxxvii. 21. § Jer. xxi. 1, 2.

saith Jehovah, I will deliver Zedekiah, king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

And unto this people thou shall say, Thus saith Jehovah; behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey. For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith Jehovah: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

And touching the house of the king of Judah, say, hear ye the word of Jehovah; O house of David, Thus saith Jehovah, execute judgment in the morning, and deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings. Behold, I am against thee,* O inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain, saith Jehovah; which say, who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitation? But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith Jehovah, and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all things round about it.†

Some of the princes and commanders having heard this fearful denunciation, besought Zedekiah to put the prophet

* "Meaning Jerusalem, which was built partly on the hill, and partly in the valley; and was compassed about with mountains."—BARKER.

† Jer. xxi. 4—14.

to death, alleging that he weakened the hands of the soldiers, and destroyed their confidence. The unbelieving monarch weakly replied, behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you. Then took they Jeremiah and cast him into a dungeon of Malchiah, the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk into the mire.*

And here this holy man of God would most likely have ended his mission, had not his promise-keeping master put it into the† heart of Ebedmelech, an Ethiopian eunuch, to petition for his deliverance in bold and animated language; My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah, the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city.‡

Nor was this act of benevolence to his faithful servant unseen or unnoticed by the eye of omniscience; for Jeremiah was ordered to declare to this humane gentile, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be accomplished in that day before thee. But I

* Jer. xxxviii. 4—6.

† The deep and universal depravity of the whole nation may well be imagined, when not a single priest or Levite was to be found to entreat for this persecuted prophet, save an Ethiopian stranger. Nor do we know which most to admire, the courage of this illustrious foreigner, in complaining, in open court, to the king, sitting on his throne, in the midst of the princes who had condemned him, of their barbarous usage of the prophet; or the superintending providence of God, in thus animating the eunuch to make so forcible a remonstrance.

‡ Jer. xxxviii. 9.

will deliver *thee* in that day, saith Jehovah: and *thou* shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid. For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith Jehovah.*

So powerful was this application, or so versatile was the monarch, that he immediately ordered Ebedmelech to take with him thirty men, and deliver the prophet; and the extreme misery and wretchedness of his situation may be imagined, by the description of the means to which Ebedmelech was obliged to have recourse, in order to extricate him.†

How powerful and irresistible is the influence which a true believer possesses over even the profligate and abandoned. Thus Zedekiah, who probably hated Jeremiah at heart as much as any of his officers, still could not rest satisfied without frequent communication with him. Seeing no prospect of relief from human exertions, he sent for him again to meet him privately in the temple; and then adjured the prophet to tell him the truth. Jeremiah having first exacted from the monarch a solemn oath, that he would neither put him to death himself, nor deliver him into the hands of his persecutors, said to him, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel; if thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live and thine house: but if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire; and thou shalt not escape out of their hand. And Zedekiah, the king, said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and

* Jer. xxxix. 15—18. † Jer. xxxviii. 13.

they mock me. But Jeremiah said, they shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of Jehovah, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live. But if thou refuse to go forth, this is the word that Jehovah hath shewed me: and, behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house, shall be brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and those women shall say, thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, and they are turned away back. So they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon, and thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire.*

Zedekiah observed his oath to Jeremiah, but neither attended to the admonition of Jehovah, nor delivered the prophet out of custody, for he remained in the court of the prison until Jerusalem was taken.†

In the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, and about a year after Nebuchadnezzar had returned to the siege; the famine having become sore, and the people being without bread; the city was broken up and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the gate‡ between the two walls,§ which was by the king's garden; (now the

* Jer. xxxviii. 14—23. † Jer xxxviii. 24—28.

‡ Or postern door.

§ "And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth; and they shall dig *through the wall* to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes." Ezek. xii. 12. "And when the city was taken about midnight, and the enemies' generals were entered into the temple, and when Zedekiah was sensible of it, he took his wives and his children, and his captains, and his friends, and with them fled out of the city *through the fortified ditch*, and through the desert." Joseph. ii. 65.

Chaldeans were by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon, to Riblah, in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him. And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah.* Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah;† and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.‡

* Antioch, in Syria.

† "Probably with the intention of rendering him incapable of reascending the throne." Burder, O. L. 614. Where see many instances of this horrid cruelty being practised by potentates, and how it was performed. Josephus says Nebuchadnezzar first reproached him personally with ingratitude. Vol. ii. 65.

‡ Jer. xxxix. 1—7. lii. 5. 11. 2 Kings, xxv. 2—7. My net also will *I* spread upon him, and he shall be taken in *my* snare; and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not *see* it, though he shall die there. Ezek. xii. 13. Jeremiah had foretold (xxxii. 4. and xxxiv 3.) that Zedekiah should not escape out of the hand of the king of Babylon, but should surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and that his eyes should behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and that he should speak with him mouth to mouth, and that he should go to Babylon; whereas Ezekiel, whose prophecy had been transmitted from Babylon, had so far concurred with Jeremiah, as to declare (xii. 13.) that Zedekiah should be carried to Babylon, but should not see it though he should die there. Josephus relates that it was this *apparent* discrepancy, for such it really was, viz.; that he should be carried to Babylon, see the king face to face, and eye to eye, and yet not see Babylon itself, which induced the misguided monarch to disbelieve both, and thus rush to his ruin: and it is remarkable how both prophecies were *literally* fulfilled. Nebuchadnezzar did not conduct the siege in person, but remained in the city of Riblah, where Zedekiah was taken to him, and where he saw him face to face, and eye to eye; and where, also, after reproaching him with his ingratitude and rebellion, he ordered his eyes

As on the final destruction of the kingdom of Israel,* so now on that of Judah, God condescended to justify his ways to man—for the sacred writer adds, Zedekiah humbled not himself before Jeremiah, the prophet, speaking from the mouth of Jehovah. And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto Jehovah, God of Israel. Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of Jehovah, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And Jehovah, the God of their fathers, sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of Jehovah arose against his people, till there was no remedy.† Therefore, he brought upon them

to be put out: and after that Zedekiah was sent to Babylon, which city, however, he *never saw*. Joseph. ii. 61—65. Jer. lii. 9—11.

* See post.

† Amongst other express commandments of Jehovah, which the rebellious Jews had repeatedly and successively violated, was that which enjoined the observance of the sabbatical year; "When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto Jehovah. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years shalt thou prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof. But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed; for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for the stranger that sojourneth with thee; and for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat." Lev. xxv. 2—8.

The mind of Omniscience, however, was well aware that this com-

the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion

mand would be disobeyed; but that the people might be left without excuse, he pointedly alluded to the breach of it as one of those offences which he would remedy by absolute force, if reiterated remonstrances and all other measures should fail; for shortly afterwards he orders Moses to declare to them, "I will bring the land into desolation, and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. Then *shall* the land enjoy her sabbaths as long as it lieth *desolate*, and ye be in your enemies' land; even *then* shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. *As long as it lieth desolate* it shall rest, because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when you dwelt upon it. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths while she lieth desolate without them. Lev. xxvi. 34, 35. 43."

It is worthy of remark that the duration of the captivity was regulated and determined expressly with reference to the fulfilment of this denunciation. It was to endure seventy years, Jer. xxix. 10.; it did endure seventy years, Dan. ix. 2.; and the reason for that particular period is expressly stated, "To fulfil the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; *for as long as she lay desolate* she kept sabbath, to fulfil three score and ten years." 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. With such an illustrious scheme and fulfilment of prophecy before him, how ought the infidel to hide his head! And how ought the sabbath breaker of every kind, and the violater of the laws of a holy God, to tremble at his wrath!

The learned Dean Prideaux thus ingeniously illustrates the subject still further. The Jews arrived in Judea in March and April, Anno 535 before Christ. As soon as they came thither they dispersed themselves according to their tribes, and betook themselves to rebuild their houses, and again manure their lands, after *they* (that is, the lands) had now, from the destruction of Jerusalem and the flight of the remainder of the people into Egypt, on the death of Gedaliah, lain desolate and uncultivated fifty-two years, according to the number of the sabbatical years which they had neglected to observe; for according to the Mosaical law they ought to have left their lands fallow every seventh year. But amongst other commandments of God, this also they had rejected, and, therefore, God made the land lie desolate, without inhabitants or cultivation, till it had enjoyed the full number of its sabbaths that it had been deprived

upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.*

The daughter of Sion being thus abandoned to the fury of her enemies, the conqueror sent Nebuzaradan, the captain of his guard, to execute the judgments of God; and he burnt† the temple and the palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem with fire;‡ and brake down all the walls of the city, and carried away to Babylon all the precious ornaments§

of. Prid. i. 179. See also Gray's Key, 109., and Keith's Evidence from Prophecy, p. 121., where that learned writer shews the present desolation and sterility of the land of Palestine, to be a continuous fulfilment of the prophecy, and punishment for the breach of the command; but which invaluable work the editor had not seen when he wrote the preceding note.

* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12—17. "Not because God approved him, who yet was the minister of his justice, but because God would by his just judgment punish this people; for Nebuchadnezzar was led by ambition and vain-glory, whereunto were joined fury and cruelty. Therefore, his work was condemnable, notwithstanding it was just and holy on God's part, who used this wicked instrument to declare his justice." BARKER. Napoleon Buonaparte was another instrument used by the Almighty to accomplish his own purposes; and when the work, which God had appointed him to do, was accomplished, as he had done in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, he discarded the wicked instrument. The Babylonian was driven out amongst the beasts of the field, and the Corsican chained to a barren rock. The heart of the former, we may hope, was penetrated by repentance and contrition, (Dan. iv. 34.); but the latter died as he lived, most probably, "without God in the world."

† The fire must have continued raging three whole days. Compare 2 Kings, xxv. 8. with Jer. lii. 12. BARKER.

‡ "In the first year of the 48th Olympiad, 424 years after the erection by Solomon, and 590 years before Christ. A. CLARKE.

§ It appears very remarkable, and perhaps a circumstance which has not been noticed by even some careful readers of the Old Testament, that no mention is any where made what eventually became of the ark of the covenant and the cherubims thereon; that holy symbol of Jehovah wherein were deposited the tables of the law, and

and furniture of the temple. He also carried away captive all the remnant of the people, except a small number

whatever was most holy and sacred; the custody of which was entrusted to the priests alone—before which the waters of Jordan were cut off—before which Joshua fell on his face to the earth—before which the idol of Dagon miraculously fell to pieces—for looking into which 50,070 men of Beth-shemesh were smitten to death—for merely touching which, though to save it from falling, Uzzah was slain—that was left 25 years at Kirjath-jearim chiefly through apprehension—we say it is remarkable that what became of it is no where mentioned. That it never was in the second temple we know, because it was one of those six glories or excellencies, the absence of which the few pious Jews, who had seen the first temple, so deeply deplored at the consecration of the second. Ezra, iii. 12. Prid. i. 185.

The Samaritans had a tradition, that in the days of Uzzi or Ozzi, the high priest, (1 Chron. vi. 6.) the ark and the other sacred vessels were, by God's command, laid up or hidden in mount Gerizim.—Joseph. iii. 65. Whereas the Jewish Rabbins are by no means agreed what became of it. The author of the second book of Maccabees tells the following tale:—It is also found in the records, that Jeremy, the prophet, commanded them that were carried away to take off the fire, as it hath been signified; and how that the prophet, having given them the law, charged them not to forget the commandments of the Lord, and that they should not err in their minds, when they see images of silver and gold, with their ornaments. And with other such speeches exhorted he them, that the law should not depart from their hearts. It was also contained in the same writing, that the prophet, being warned of God, commanded the tabernacle and the ark to go with him, as he went forth into the mountain where Moses climbed up, and saw the heritage of God. And when Jeremy came thither he found an hollow cave, wherein he laid the tabernacle, and the ark, and the altar of incense, and so stopped the door. And some of those that followed him came to mark the way, but they could not find it. Which when Jeremy perceived, he blamed them, saying; As for that place, it shall be unknown until the time that God gather his people again together, and receive them unto mercy. Then shall the Lord shew them these things, and the glory of the Lord shall appear, and the cloud also, as it was shewed under Moses, and as when Solomon also desired that the place might be honour-

of the poor, whom he left to be vine dressers and husbandmen.*

Nebuzaradan also took Seraiah, the chief priest, and Zephaniah, the second priest, and several of the officers, and brought them to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, where he lay with his army, and he slew them all there.† As for the small

ably sanctified.—2 Maccabees, i. 8. Other Rabbins allege that Josiah caused the ark to be placed in a vault under ground, which Solomon, foreseeing the destruction of the temple, had built for the express purpose of preserving it. The most probable conjecture may be that it was destroyed when the first temple was burned by Nebuchadnezzar, above related, as well as the other four glories or excellencies, no one of which ever graced the second temple; (Prid. i. 192.) but the glory of which still exceeded, beyond all measure, that of the former by the immediate presence of the Lord of Glory himself, who was the great Antitype of the whole, and perhaps even of the temple itself. Who is left amongst you that saw this house in her first glory? And how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes, in comparison of it, as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Josiah, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord and work, (for I am with you saith the Lord of Hosts). According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you, fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Yet once it is a little while and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of Hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of Hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith Jehovah of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of Hosts. Haggai, ii. 3. 9. Dr. Gill on the Messiah, pp. 41. 50. See Whiston, vol. i. 215., where that author gives a curious extract from a supposed epistle, from the Jews at Jerusalem to the Jews of Egypt, in the days of Jonathan, the high priest. But see the prophecy of Jer. lii. 16, 17. and Burder, O. L. 615.

* 2 Kings, xxv. 8—17. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18—20. Jer. xxxix. 8—10. lii. 12. 23.

† 2 Kings, xxv. 18—21. Jer. lii. 24—30.

remnant of the people who were left, Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah to be their ruler.*

By the express command of his sovereign, however, Nebuzaradan having taken the holy prophet amongst the other captives as far as Ramah, said unto him, Jehovah, thy God, hath pronounced this evil upon this place. Now Jehovah hath brought it, and done according as he hath said: because ye have sinned against Jehovah, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore, this thing is come upon you. And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which were upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go.

Now while he was not yet gone back, he said, Go back also to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go. Upon which Jeremiah went to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.†

As soon as it was known that Gedaliah was entrusted with the government of the remnant of the Jews, several of the officers and princes, who had fled from the city, resorted to him, and amongst others, Ishmael, Johanan, Jonathan, Seraiah, and Jaazaniah, with their men, to whom Gedaliah sware; "Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to serve

* 2 Kings, xxv. 22. † Jer. xl. 1—6.

the Chaldeans, which will come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine, and summer fruits, and oil, and put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken." Likewise, when all the Jews that were in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan; even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.*

The degraded state to which the Jews were now reduced, could only be exceeded by that which took place at their final dispersion, more than six centuries afterwards; for Ishmael and his companions had not united themselves to Gedaliah more than a few months, when Johanan and his party informed him that Ishmael had entered into a conspiracy with Baalis, king of the Ammonites, to slay him, and offered to assassinate Ishmael privately. This Gedaliah peremptorily forbid; but disbelieving the suggestion of Johanan, most probably in consequence of the wicked proposal which accompanied it, he neglected to take any precautions for his own protection.†

Johanan's information, however, was but too correct; for in the seventh month of the government, Ishmael, who was of the seed royal, with ten of the late monarch's princes, came to Gedaliah at Mizpah; and whilst eating bread with him, probably on his own invitation, they slew him, and all the Jews that were with him, and such of the Chaldeans and men of war as happened to be at Mizpah.‡

So secretly and effectually had the work of murder been performed, that two days passed without its being

* 2 Kings, xxv. 22—24. Jer. xl. 7—12.
† Jer. xl. 13—16.
‡ Jer. xli. 1—3. 2 Kings, xxv. 25.

known, that Gedaliah was dead; when eighty persons from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria, having their beards shaven, and their cloaths rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand,* were met on their way to the house of Jehovah,† by the hypocritical assassin, who, with tears in his eyes, invited them to accompany him to Gedaliah. As soon, however, as he had decoyed them into the city, he slew seventy of them, and cast their bodies into the midst of a pit, which Asa, king of Judah, had made for fear of Baasha,‡ king of Israel; but he spared ten of these people, on account of their having treasures in the field, of wheat, barley, oil, and honey.§

Having perpetrated these atrocious acts, Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, with the king's daughters, and departed to go over to the Ammonites; but Johanan and his friends, who, from dwelling in the fields or plains,‖ had escaped the massacre, having heard of that transaction, immediately pursued after Ishmael, and overtook him by the great waters in Gibeon.

* "A most criminal species of idolatry, joining the worship of God and idols together." Burder, O. L. 982.

† Viz.: at Jerusalem; for though the temple was destroyed, yet the people that were left continued to offer sacrifices, and worship there on the place where it stood, as long as they remained in the land. Prid. i. 116. This must be a house at Mizpah, which they had set apart for the present occasion. There were, it seems, some *godly* Jews at that time in Samaria. WALL. But see the last note.

‡ "That is, it was a cistern, or reservoir for water, for the supply of Mizpah, when Asa expected it would be besieged by Baasha." A. CLARKE.

§ Jer. xli. 4—9. "In Barbary, when the grain is winnowed, they lodge it in mattamores, or subterranean repositories; two or three hundred of which are sometimes together, the smallest holding four hundred bushels. These are very common in other parts of the East, especially about Aleppo. Burder, O. C. 779.

‖ Jer. xl. 13.

Upon the approach of Johanan, all the captives and companions of Ishmael forsook him and fled to Johanan, except eight men, who, with Ishmael, made good their retreat, and escaped to the Ammonites.*

After this, Johanan and all the remnant of the people took up a temporary residence at Geruth-Chimham, near Bethlehem; with the intention of proceeding into Egypt, because of the Chaldeans, of whom they were afraid, on account of the murder of Gedaliah, which they apprehended might be visited upon them.†

By some circumstance which is not related, Jeremiah had not suffered in the massacre at Mizpah, but had been carried voluntarily or coercively by Johanan, and his partizans to Chimham; and to him they now applied with all seeming reverence, all the people approaching him from the least even to the greatest, and saying, Let we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto Jehovah, thy God, even for all this remnant; (for we are left but a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:) that Jehovah, thy God, may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.‡

The prophet replied, I have heard you; behold, I will pray unto Jehovah, your God, according to your words; and it shall come to pass, that whatsoever thing Jehovah shall answer you, I will declare it unto you, I will keep nothing back from you. And to assure the prophet they were sincere in their inquiries, they voluntarily proffered an oath, as a test of their sincerity. "Jehovah be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which Jehovah, thy God, shall send thee to us. Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of

* Jer. xli. 11—15. † Jer. xli. 16—18.
‡ Jer. xlii. 1—3.

Jehovah, our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of Jehovah, our God."*

After ten days, Jehovah condescended to vouchsafe them a message, when Jeremiah declared, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him, if ye will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. Be not afraid of the King of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith Jehovah: for I am with you, to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. And I will shew mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land. But if ye say, we will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of Jehovah, your God, saying, no; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell;—now, therefore, hear the word of Jehovah, ye remnant of Judah, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; if ye wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there; then it shall come to pass, that the sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt; and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die. So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there, they shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; and none of them shall remain, or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them. For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel: As mine anger and my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt; and ye shall

* Jer. xlii. 5, 6

be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

Jehovah hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah: Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have admonished you this day. For ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto Jehovah, your God, saying, pray for us unto Jehovah, our God; and according unto all that Jehovah, our God, shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it. And now I have this day declared it to you; but ye have not obeyed the voice of Jehovah, your God, nor any thing for the which he hath sent me unto you. Now, therefore, know certainly that ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go and to sojourn.*

Notwithstanding their late oath, Johanan and the other officers no sooner heard the declaration of the prophet, than they declared he had spoken falsely, and that Jehovah had not sent any such message; but charged him with being instigated by Baruch to deliver them into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put them to death, and carry them captives to Babylon.†

In direct violation, therefore, of the command of Jehovah, did Johanan and all his party take the whole remnant of Judah, including the king's daughters, Jeremiah, and Baruch with them into Egypt, and settled at Tahpanhes‡ and other neighbouring cities.§

Still the prophet was permitted to warn this infatuated remnant; for whilst at Tahpanhes, Jehovah said to him, Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay,

* Jer. xlii. 9—22. † Jer. xliii. 1—3.

‡ The Hanes of Isaiah, (xxx. 4).—The Taphnas of the Septuagint, and the Daphnæ Pelusiæ of Herodotus, (Euterpe); it was situated near Pelusium. Wells, i. 233. Gray's Key, 375.

§ Jer. xliii. 4—7. 2 Kings, xxv. 26.

in the brick-kiln, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house, in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; and say unto them, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones, that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death; and such as are for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword. And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace. He shall break also the images of Beth-shemesh,* that is in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.†

Again he addressed all the Jews which dwelt at Migdol,‡ Tahpanhes, and Noph,§ and in the country of Pathros,‖ saying; Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein, because of their wickedness which they have committed, to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor your fathers. Howbeit, I sent unto you all my servants, the pro-

* "Literally the house or temple of the sun, which was worshipped here; and whose images are said to have been of *solid gold*. Beth-shemesh is the same as Heliopolis." A. CLARKE.

† Jer. xliii. 8—13.

‡ A city of Lower Egypt, not far from Pelusium.

§ Memphis, the capital of Middle Egypt.

‖ The Thebais.

phets, rising early and sending them, saying; Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.* But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. Wherefore, my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day. Therefore, now thus saith Jehovah, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; in that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be a curse, and a reproach, among all the nations of the earth? Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you, and before your fathers.

Therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt, to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, and fall in the land of Egypt; they shall even be consumed by the sword, and by the famine; they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword, and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: so that none of the remnant of Judah, which

* "A fine anthropopathia." A. CLARKE.

are gone into the land of Egypt, to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape.*

Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us, in the name of Jehovah, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil: But since we left off to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword, and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?†

Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him that answer, saying, The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not Jehovah remember them, and came it not into his mind? So that Jehovah could no longer bear, because of the evil of

* Jer. xliv. 1—14. Scaliger observes, out of Eusebius, that Artaxerxes Ochus, making an expedition into Egypt, removed a considerable number of Jews out of that country, and carried them away as far as the Caspian Sea, and there settled them. LOWTH.

† Jer. xliv. 15—19.

your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore, is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without inhabitant, as at this day. Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against Jehovah, and have not obeyed the voice of Jehovah, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore, this evil is happened unto you, as at this day.

Moreover, Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of Jehovah, all Judah, that are in the land of Egypt: thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, saying; Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. Therefore, hear ye the word of Jehovah, all Judah, that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith Jehovah, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land of Egypt, saying, Jehovah, God, liveth. Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah, that are in the land of Egypt, shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. Yet a small number that escape the sword, shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose word shall stand, mine, or theirs. And this shall be a sign unto you, saith Jehovah, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil: thus saith Jehovah; Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt, into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah, king of Judah, into the hand of

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.*

Of the prophet Jeremiah the sacred record affords no further information ;† but we may suppose that he died in Egypt, worn out with grief, anxiety, fatigue, and old age; but assured of a glorious reward for his faithfulness, at the hand of that Being who never fails those who trust in him. Neither does the

* Jer. xliv. 20—30. xlvi. 13—26. "It is very remarkable, that at the very same time when Jeremiah had declared this prophecy in Egypt, Ezekiel, who was then in Babylon, prophesied the same thing to his captive brethren there." Ezek. xxxii. and Wall in loco.

† According to the account of St. Jerome, he was stoned to death at Tahpanhes, (see p. 276) about 586 years before the birth of Christ, either by his own countrymen, as is generally maintained, or by the Egyptians; to both of which people he had rendered himself obnoxious, by the terrifying prophecies which he had uttered. The chronicle of Alexandria relates, that the prophet had incensed the Egyptians by predicting that their idols should be overthrown by an earthquake, when the Saviour of the earth should be born and placed in a manger. His prophecies, however, that are still extant concerning the conquests of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, "the servant of God," must have been sufficient to excite the fears and hatred of those against whom they were uttered. It was added to this account which Ptolemy received, that Alexander the Great visiting the tomb of Jeremiah, and hearing what he had predicted concerning his person, ordered that the prophet's urn should be removed to Alexandria, and built a magnificent monument to his memory. This was soon rendered famous, and, as a reverence for the prophet's character encircled it with imaginary influence, it became celebrated as a place of miracles. Other accounts, however, relate that the prophet returned into his own country; and travellers are still shewn a place in the neigbourhood of Jerusalem, where, as they are told, Jeremiah composed his prophecies; and where Constantine erected a tomb to his memory. Other traditions relate that he was thrown into a pit, and transfixed with darts. Gray's Key, 375, 376. A. Clarke. The Jews of Cairo allege that Jeremiah visited the exact spot upon which their synagogue is built. Wilson's Travels, i. 117.

Scripture give us any further account of his rebellious countrymen, who had carried the prophet into Egypt.*

* Jer. xliv. 27, 28. Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good; and all the men of Judah, that are in the land of Egypt, shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. Yet a small number that escape the sword, shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah; and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine or theirs; (Jer. xliv. 27, 28.) and it is most probable that most of these rebellious Jews fell into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, when he shortly afterwards invaded Egypt, and spread devastation from Migdol to Cyrene. Prid. i. 127.

"How these prophecies were fulfilled we learn from ancient historians. The sum of such information is this:—The subjects of Hophra rebelling, he sent *Amasis*, one of his generals,* to reduce them to their duty. But no sooner had *Amasis* begun to make his speech, than they fixed a helmet on his head, and proclaimed him king. *Amasis* accepted the title, and confirmed the Egyptians in their revolt; and the greater part of the nation declaring for him, *Hophra* was obliged to return into Upper Egypt; and the country being thus weakened by intestine war, was attacked and easily overcome by Nebuchadnezzar, who, on quitting it, left *Amasis* his viceroy. After Nebuchadnezzar's departure, *Apries*, or *Hophra*, marched against *Amasis:* but, being defeated at Memphis, was taken prisoner, carried to Saïs, and strangled in his own palace, thus verifying this prophecy. Herodot. Euterpe. Thus Nebuchadnezzar made an easy conquest of the land. He conquered it as easily as *a shepherd puts on his cloak; he went thence in peace*, having clothed himself with its spoils; and kept all quiet under a viceroy of his own choosing. The rebellion of Pharaoh's subjects was the *fire that God kindled in Egypt*. (Jer. xliii. 12.) And thus was he *delivered into the hands of his enemies*, his revolted people, and *into the hand of him who sought his life*, viz.—*Amasis*, his general. And thus the whole prophecy was literally fulfilled." A. Clarke.

* Dr. Wall says he was Hophra's own son.

THE CAPTIVITY.

We have seen that the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel were taken amongst the captives to Babylon, and it was during that captivity that their prophecies were delivered.

In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and before the rebellion of Jehoiakim, the former monarch had a dream, wherewith his spirit was troubled, but which he had wholly forgotten. All the wise men of the Chaldeans having failed to recover this dream, and being immediately condemned to death, as they justly deserved, for pretending to foretel that of which they knew they were wholly ignorant, Jehovah condescended to put honour upon the prophet Daniel, not only by communicating to him the remarkable dream of the metallic image, but also by enabling him, thence to pourtray and depict the four great monarchies, which have ever since more or less ruled the civilized world.*

Nebuchadnezzar having returned to Babylon with his army, after the captivity of Zedekiah, set up the golden image in honour of his god, in the plains of Dura, which gave rise to that magnificent display of the divine power, which is related by the same prophet.†

After this, the Babylonish monarch proceeded to besiege the city of Old Tyre; but whilst his army lay there, he dispatched Nebuzaradan, with a body of troops, to put a finishing stroke to the ravage of Jerusalem, probably in revenge for the murder of Gedaliah; when he took from thence 745 persons, being all that then remained of that once immense population.‡

* Dan. i. See this prophecy illustrated by Sir Isaac Newton, Bp. Newton, and all the commentators; and a long discourse respecting it in Adam Clarke, Keith, &c.

† Dan. iii. ‡ Jer. lii. 30. Prid. i. 121.

Nebuchadnezzar having taken Tyre after thirteen years' siege,* and when every head was become bald, and every shoulder peeled,† proceeded to Egypt, and conquered and lay waste the whole of that country, and then took captive those Jews who had fled with Johanan into that kingdom;‡ and returning to Babylon with his spoils, had his dream of a great tree, which was interpreted by Daniel,§ who concluded with the following earnest appeal; Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.‖

Being at peace with all the world, the greater part of which he had conquered, this mighty monarch set himself to improve and beautify his metropolis of Babylon; a minute description of the extraordinary splendour and strength of which may be seen in Prideaux.¶

Inflated with pride, and forgetful of his dream, and the warning admonition of the prophet, this proud monarch, while walking in the palace, or rioting in the luxury of greatness, exclaimed, Is not this Babylon that I have built, for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying; O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet

* Prid. i. 24. † Ezek. xxix. 18. ‡ Prid. i. 127.
§ Dan. iv. 4—26. ‖ Dan. iv. 27. ¶ Con. i. 129—142.

with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.*

At the end of seven years, upon being restored to his reasonable faculties, he gave God the glory due to his name; of which no better evidence can be offered, than the desire expressed by himself, that this wonderful transaction should be made known to the nations of the earth: Nebuchadnezzar, the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the High God hath wrought toward me. How great are his signs, and how mighty are his wonders. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

And at the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time, my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, and extol, and honour the King of Heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride, he is able to abase.†

Zedekiah's name is not mentioned after his apprehension: and, therefore, he most probably died in confinement at

* Dan. iv. 30—33. † Dan. iv. 1—3. 34—37.

Babylon. But not so his elder brother Jehoiachin; for after being kept in custody during the whole remaining reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and during which most of the above extraordinary and wonderful events took place; he was released on the decease of that mighty monarch, by his son and successor, Evilmerodach, who spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon, and changed his prison garments: and Jehoiachin did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life. And for his diet, there was a continual portion given him of the king of Babylon, every day until the day of his death.*

In order to keep up the connection of the history, a slight digression is indispensable, for the purpose of introducing one of the most extraordinary and interesting individuals of profane antiquity, not only with respect to his military and political character, but more especially in regard to his being the specially appointed instrument of the Most High, long previously foretold; and prepared to restore the remnant of his chosen people, to their native and desolate country.

Nearly a century previous to this period, and even long before the desolation had taken place, the evangelical prophet had thus anticipated the existence and exploits of this distinguished conqueror. "Thus saith Jehovah, the Redeemer, that saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand have I holden, to subdue nations before him."†

Cyrus was the son of Cambyses, who was either the king, or a nobleman of Persia, by Mandana, the daughter of Astyages, king of Media. Cyrus being educated at the court of his grandfather Astyages, accompanied that prince

* Jer. lii. 31—34. 2 Kings, xxv. 27—30.

† Is. xliv. 24—28. xlv. 1. Bp. Newton, i. 154. Prid. i. 147.

in his war against Evilmerodach, and much distinguished himself in a victory which was then obtained over that monarch; and afterwards returned to his father in Persia.*

Evilmerodach having been assassinated, was succeeded by his brother-in-law, Neriglissar, and on the death of Jehoiachin, the particulars of which do not appear, Salathiel, his son, became nominal prince of the Jews, or as they were called for many generations, the head of the captivity.†

On the death of Astyages, he was succeeded by his son, Cyaxares II., also called Darius, the Mede;‡ against whom Neriglissar having formed a powerful confederacy, that

* Prid. i. 147—149. quoting Xenophon's Cyropæd, and Herodotus.

† 2 Esdras, v. 16. Notwithstanding the loss of the authority, they still kept up the title; and for a great many ages after, in the parts about Babylon, there was always one of the house of David, which, by the name of the head of the captivity, was acknowledged and honoured as a prince among the people, and had some sort of jurisdiction, as far as it was consistent with the government they were under, always invested in him; and sometimes a ratification was obtained of it from the princes that reigned in that country. And it is said this pageantry is still kept up among them; and chiefly, it seems, that they may be furnished from hence with an answer to give the Christians, when they urge the prophecy of Jacob (Gen. xlix. 10.) amongst them: for whensoever, from the prophecy, it is pressed upon them that the Messiah must be come, because the sceptre is now departed from Judah, and there is no more a lawgiver among them from between his feet, we are commonly told of *this head of the captivity;* their usual answer being, that the sceptre is still preserved among them in *the head of the captivity;* and that they have also in their Nasi, or prince of the Sanhedrim, (another pageantry officer of theirs) a lawgiver from between the feet of Judah (that is, of his seed) still remaining in Israel. But if these officers are now ceased from among them, as some of them will acknowledge, then this answer must cease also, and the prophecy returns in its full force upon them; and why do they then any longer resist the power of it? Prid. i. 145.

‡ Dan. v. 31. Anselm Bayley in loco. Prid. i. 165—167.

monarch called Cyrus to his help, and on his arrival with 30,000 Persians, gave him, also, the command of the Median army. After three years these powerful armies met, and Neriglissar was defeated and slain.*

The Babylonian monarch was succeeded by his son, Laborosoarchod, with whom Cyrus continued the war, and twice approached the walls of Babylon, and then returned with his victorious army towards Media; and sent for Cyaxares, to consult with him as to the future operations of the war.†

Laborosoarchod, having been assassinated by his subjects, was succeeded by Nabonadius, or, as he is called in Scripture, Belshazzar, a wicked prince; but during whose reign, the government was chiefly administered by his mother, Nicotris, a woman of singular ability.‡

In the first year of this monarch's reign, the vision of the beasts and horns was revealed to Daniel,§ being in substance, but under different emblems, an amplification of Nebuchadnezzar's metallic image.

In the third year of the reign of this monarch, the prophet Daniel saw the vision of the ram and the he goat,‖ which foretold the overthrow of the Persian empire, by Alexander the Great, and the persecution of the Jews, by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria.¶

Cyrus having defeated Crœsus, king of Lydia, and taken his capital city of Sardis; and subdued all the surrounding nations, from the Ægean sea to the Euphrates, as well as in Syria and Arabia, and overthrown Belshazzar in battle, shut him up, and besieged him in Babylon.**

God had declared by his prophet Isaiah; "I will loose

* Prid. i. 146—151. † Prid. i. 151, 152.
‡ Prid. i. 151. 154. 162. § Dan. vii.
‖ Burder, O. C. 846, 847.
¶ Dan. viii. ** Prid. i. 154—159.

the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut: I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places,* that thou mayest know that I, Jehovah, who call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.†

And whilst Belshazzar, the king, made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand, Belshazzar, whilst he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels, which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple, which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God, which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, and his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers

* "Sardis and Babylon, when taken by Cyrus, were the wealthiest cities in the world. Crœsus, celebrated beyond all the kings of that age for his riches, gave up his treasures to Cyrus, with an exact account in writing of the whole, containing the particulars with which each waggon was loaded when they were carried away; and they were delivered to Cyrus at the palace of Babylon." Cyrop. lib. vii. A. Clarke on Isaiah, xlv. 3. For an account of the destruction and present state of Sardis, afterwards the seat of one of the apostolical churches in Asia, and now the village Sart, see Jos. Milner's Sermons, vol. iv. pp. 117—150. Jones' Lectures on the Apocalypse, 89. T. Milner's History of the Seven Churches of Asia, pp. 268—308.

† Is. xlv. 1—4.

of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall, of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read* the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonied.

Now the queen,† by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: and the queen spake, and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: there is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in

* The reason why they could not read it was, because it was written in the old Hebrew letters, now called the Samaritan character, which the Babylonians knew nothing of. Prid. i. 161. For which character see Walton's Polyglot, and Shuckford, vol. i. p. 221. Besides which, each word stood for a sentence.

† "The queen mother, Nicotris, the widow of Evilmerodach, is generally supposed to be meant. She was a woman of great capacity and reputation; and her active and prudent management had been, for some time, the chief stay of the empire.—She spake of Daniel in language similar to what her father-in-law Nebuchadnezzar had used, and which she probably had learned from him; for she was aged, and Nebuchadnezzar had not been dead above twenty-four years, so that she no doubt well remembered the extraordinary events which had occurred towards the close of his life." Scott.

the days of thy father, light, and understanding, and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers: forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation. Then was Daniel brought in before the king.

And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king, my father, brought out of Jewry? I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light, and understanding, and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing: and I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and

his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: and he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts; and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of Heaven, and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written. And this is the writing that was written, **Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.***

This is the interpretation of the thing: **Mene**; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. **Tekel**; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. **Peres**: thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.†

Neither did the vengeance of God tarry; for probably whilst even the prophet was speaking, and in the midst of

* "The literal meaning of these words seems to be, He hath numbered, He hath numbered, He hath weighed, and they divide it." Scott. See also Josephus, li. 80.

† Dan. v. 1—29.

the riot and debauchery, which had this night left the city defenceless, and the garrison off their guard; Cyrus, opening the head of the trenches on both sides the Euphrates, so drained the river, that two bands of his soldiers headed by Gobrias and Gadates, Babylonian noblemen, who had been driven into rebellion by the atrocities of Laborosoarchod,* penetrated into the dry canal, and actually found the gates† of brass on both sides the river, open; and immediately forcing their way into the palace, they slew the drunken monarch and his nobles amidst their revels, and obtained

* Prid. i. 152.

† Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the *gates shall not be shut*. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, Jehovah, who call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob, my servant's sake, and Israel, mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name; I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am Jehovah, and there is none else, there is no God beside me; I girded thee, though thou hast not known me. Is. xlv. 1. 5. Prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land shall tremble and sorrow, for every purpose of Jehovah shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight; they have remained in their holds; their might hath failed; they became as women; they have burned her dwelling places; her bars are broken. One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end. And that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted. Jer, li. 28. 32.

possession of BABYLON the GREAT.* So that same night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.†

* Prid. i. 159, 160. "The Euphrates, in the middle of the summer, from the melting of the snows on the mountains of Armenia, like the Nile, overflows the country. In order to diminish the inundation, and to carry off the waters, two canals were made by Nebuchadnezzar, a hundred miles above the city; the first on the eastern side, called Naharmalca, or the royal river, by which the Euphrates was let into the Tigris; the other on the western side, called Pallacopas, or Naharaga, (nahar agam, the river of the pool) by which the redundant waters were carried into a vast lake, forty miles square, contrived not only to lessen the inundation, but for a reservoir, with sluices, to water the barren country on the Arabian side.

Cyrus, by turning the whole river into the lake by the Pallacopas, laid the channel, where it ran through the city, almost dry; so that his army entered it, both above and below, by the bed of the river, the water not reaching above the middle of the thigh. By the great quantity of the water let into the lake, the sluices and dams were destroyed; and being never repaired afterwards, the waters spread over the whole country below, and reduced it to a morass, in which the river is lost. 'And thus a navigable river has been totally lost

Cyrus having thus made himself master of Babylon, took possession of the government in the name of his uncle, Darius,* and having visited both Persia and Media, and married a daughter of Darius, that monarch returned with him to Babylon.†

Darius having divided the kingdom into provinces, and set over them 120 princes, appointed three presidents to superintend them, of whom the prophet Daniel, on account of his great wisdom and experience, was named the first. Roused by jealousy at this appointment, his colleagues sought occasion for accusing him to Darius, Cyrus being then absent on an expedition into Syria and Ethiopia ;‡ but such was his fidelity and purity of conduct, that no opportunity for doing so was afforded them. All other stratagems failing, they had recourse to entrap him, as to his religious worship. That worship had perhaps become more conspicuous from Daniel, having understood by books, the number of the years, whereof the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah the prophet,§ that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer, and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: ‖

* Dan. v. 31. † Prid. i. 167. ‡ Prid. i. 169.

§ Jer. xxv. 12. xxix. 10.

‖ "The prophet was much above eighty years of age at this time, and chief president *(or lord lieutenant)* of the whole kingdom. Yet he diligently set himself to seek from God, by prayer and fasting, with every token of sorrow, humiliation, and self-denial, the performance of his promised mercy to his afflicted people, and his future blessings upon them. He had his regular hours of prayer, *three times a day*, and we may be sure that he did not forget his people upon these occasions; yet he regarded it as a duty incumbent upon him, to set apart stated seasons for mortification and devotion, in the distressed state of his people and of the church of God." Scott. What would be said of a *Christian* minister of state who

and I prayed unto Jehovah, my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts, and from thy judgments: neither have we hearkened unto thy servants, the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries, whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord, our God, belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; neither have we obeyed the voice of Jehovah, our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants, the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore, the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As

exhibited such evidence of real piety; and what has been said in the only instance almost in which it occurred! And what taunts and reproaches would be cast upon such a one, by those, who in Parliament make such professions of regard and anxiety for THE CHURCH!

it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before Jehovah, our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. Therefore, hath Jehovah watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for Jehovah, our God, is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice.

And now, O Lord, our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt, with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly. O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because, for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

Now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.*

Whilst he was yet speaking, and praying, and confessing his sin, and the sin of his people Israel, and presenting his supplication before Jehovah, his God, for the holy mountain of his God; yea, whilst he was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched him about the time of the evening oblation: and he informed him, and

* Dan. ix. 2–19.

talked with him, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications, the commandment came forth, and I am now come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore, understand the matter, and consider the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.

Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah, the Prince,* shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.†

A gracious God, however, who always knows how to bring good out of evil, overruled the machinations of the princes of Babylon, so as to exhibit the faith and integrity of the prophet, and by delivering him from the jaws of the hungry lions,

*That is, seventy weeks of years, or four hundred and ninety years; at which time Christ came. Prid. i. 168. See this prophecy explained and commented upon by A. Clarke, Dr. Wall, S. Clark, and Scott, and all the commentators and writers on prophecy.

† Dan. ix. 20—27.

establish his own glory, and reinstate his faithful servant still more firmly in the confidence of his sovereign: for then it was that Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwelt in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, that in every dominion of my kingdom, men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus, the Persian.*

THE RESTORATION.

Upon the deaths of Cambyses, and of Darius, or Cyaxares II., which happened about the same time, Cyrus succeeded to the dominions of both those princes, thereby laying the foundation of the Medo-Persian empire; and the seventy years of the captivity foretold by Jeremiah,† having now just expired,‡ Jehovah, most probably by the instrumentality of Daniel, stirred up the spirit of this mighty monarch, who, no doubt, had been so elevated for that express purpose, and who issued a proclamation throughout all his kingdom. Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia;§ Jehovah, the God of Heaven, hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth;‖ and

* Dan. vi. 4—28. † Jer. xxix. 10. ‡ Prid. i. 170. See p. 267.

§ "Of all the nations around Judea, the Persians alone, who restored them from the Babylonish captivity, yet remain a kingdom." Keith, 96. Is. lx. 12. Zech. i. 15.

‖ He might well say so; for not only may we reasonably suppose he had been shewn the prophecy of Isaiah, xliv. and xlv. 1. by Daniel;

he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of Jehovah, the God of Israel, (he is the God), which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.*

In consequence of this proclamation, 42,360 of the captives of Judah, with 7,537 attendants, and a multitude of camels, horses, and cattle, were soon assembled together;† to whom the noble minded monarch gave the vessels of the house of Jehovah, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and placed in the house of his gods;‡ to which great treasures were added by the voluntary contribution of those of the captives who, from local connections, or other motives, were to remain behind.§

Zerubbabel,‖ or Sheshbazzar,¶ the son of Salathiel,** was appointed Tirshatha, governor†† or leader,‡‡ of

this interesting assembly, with Jeshua, the hereditary high priest.*

What befel them on their journey we are not informed, but on their arrival in Jerusalem they resorted to their own cities and tribes,† for several of the ten tribes always continued with and followed the good and bad fortune of the tribe of Judah;‡ and applied themselves to the rebuilding of their dwellings and the cultivation of their lands,§ which had now had the benefit of the sabbatical years,‖ of which the sins of her latter monarchs had deprived her, and which was one great cause of her captivity.¶

On the feast of trumpets** they all assembled at Jerusalem, and when they came to the house of Jehovah, they offered freely†† for the house of God, to set it up in his place: they gave after their ability into the treasure of the work, threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound of silver, and one hundred priests' garments;‡‡ and there observed the great day of expiation;§§ and kept the feast of tabernacles,‖‖ and other festivals.¶¶

Of this general assembly of the people, Jeshua and Zerubbabel availed themselves to rebuild the altar of burnt offerings, which they set upon his bases, and offered burnt offerings thereon, as the best precaution they could take to protect them from their surrounding enemies.***

* Prid. i. 175. † Prid. i. 178.
‡ Prid. i. 175, 176. § Prid. i. 178. ‖ Prid. i. 179.
¶ See note, p. 266.
** Lev. xxiii. 24 Numb. xxix. 1. Prid. i. 179.
†† To the value of £75,500.; a prodigious sum in their circumstances. Prid. i. 180.
‡‡ Ezra, ii. 68, 69. iii. 1. Prid. i. 180.
§§ 10 Tisri. Prid. i. 180.
‖‖ 15 Tisri. Ibid. ¶¶ Prid. i. 180.
*** Ezra, iii. 2, 3. 6. The altar stood in the middle of the inner court of the temple, exactly before the porch leading to the holy

Having made considerable preparations during the first year* for laying the foundation of the temple, they performed that ceremony in the second year, with great solemnity; the priests and Levites, after the ordinance of David,† singing together by course, in praising and giving thanks unto Jehovah, because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised Jehovah, because the foundation of the house of Jehovah was laid.‡

But there were amongst the assemblage some of the ancient fathers who still remembered the splendour of the former temple; and joyful as they were to see the work of Jehovah now reviving, they could not refrain from exhibiting great

place; and hereon were made the daily offerings of the morning and evening service, and all other offerings, ordinary and extraordinary, which were offered up to God by fire. It had been beaten down and destroyed by the Babylonians at the burning of the temple, and in the same place was it now again restored. Prid. i. 181.; where see large extracts from Lightfoot, as to its dimensions, use, &c.

* Ezra, iii. 7. "For the Tyrians and Zidonians, being wholly given to traffic and navigation, did very little addict themselves to the planting of olive-yards or vineyards, or to the tillage of the ground; neither had they indeed any territory for either; for their gain being very great by sea, they did not set themselves to make any enlargements by land; but were in a manner pent up within the narrow precincts of the cities in which they dwelt; and, therefore, having very little corn, wine, or oil, of their own, they depended mostly on their neighbours for these provisions; from whom they had them, either for their money, or by way of barter and exchange, for other commodities which they supplied them with, and they were mostly furnished this way out of the Jews' country; and therefore they readily assisted them with their labour and shipping, to be supplied with these necessaries in exchange for it. So that as it was by their help that Solomon built the first temple, so also was it by their help that the Jews were enabled to build the second." Prid. i. 209, 210. 1 Kings, v. 11.

† 1 Chron. xxiii. xxiv. ‡ Ezra, iii. 10. 11.

sorrow, when they saw how far the erection, of which the foundation was now laid, was likely to fall short of the original.*

When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin, that is, the Samaritans,† heard that the children of the captivity were rebuilding the temple unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, they came to Zerubbabel, saying; Let us build with you, for we seek your God as ye do: and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon, king of Assur, which brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them; Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, as king Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us.‡

In consequence of this refusal, or from other motives equally culpable, the people of the land, that is, the same

* Ezra, iii. 12. There were six material and important things, in respect of which the second temple fell short of the glory of the first; viz.—

1. The ark of the covenant, with the mercy seat and cherubim.
2. The shechinah, or divine presence
3. Urim and thummim, or the breastplate of twelve precious stones.*
4. The holy fire.
5. The spirit of prophecy.
6. The holy anointing oil.

As to all which, and their specific uses, see Prid. i. 185. 202. Unless, therefore, the Jews admit that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, the prophecy of Haggai (ii. 9.) has never been fulfilled. See also Gill on the Messiah, p. 41—51.

† Prid. i. 204.

‡ Ezra, iv. 1—3. "The Jews, who were exclusively the worshippers of the true God, could not admit the Samaritans to assist them in this work; for the Samaritans were not true worshippers, inasmuch as they only worshipped Jehovah, in common with the gods of the nations." Prid. i. 205.

* See Gray's Key, 129. 207.

Samaritans, weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose by misrepresenting them at the court of Cyrus, during the remainder of the reign of that monarch.*

It was probably† this state of the Jewish affairs, and the slow progress which, in consequence of the opposition and arts of their enemies, his brethren were able to make in the restoration of their temple and polity, that threw the prophet Daniel into that state of melancholy, to relieve him from which, Jehovah saw fit to console him with a splendid and glorious vision, revealing the succession of the kings of Persia, the empire of the Macedonians, and the conquests of the Romans.

In those days, I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel;‡ then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz; his body also was like the beryl,§ and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision: for the

* Ezra, iv. 4, 5. See many curious particulars relating to Cyrus, his character, motives, &c. detailed by Mr. R. Watson in his Biblical and Theological Dictionary, *sub hoc voce*. "This Cyrus is called God's shepherd by Xenophon, as well as by Isaiah. The prophet says of him: I will make a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir—which makes Xenophon's most excellent history of him very credible." Whist. Jos. ii. 88.

† Prid. i. 206. ‡ Or the Tigris.

§ "Or Turquoise, which is of a sky colour." S. Clark.

men that were with me saw not the vision:* but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore, I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words; and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.† But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befal thy people in the latter days; for yet the vision is for many days. And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.

Then there came again and touched me one like the appear-

* Acts, ix. 7. † Thy prayers.

ance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me. Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael, your prince.*

As we hear no more of this eminent prophet, it is probable that he died soon after this last revelation; and we may well suppose that in proportion to the extent of his influence†

* Dan. x. 2—21. xi. xii. Mr. Scott's note upon this passage is extremely beautiful, and well worthy of attentive perusal.

† Daniel was not only a prophet, notwithstanding what the Jews say to the contrary, (Prid. i. 206. My edition of Leslie's Short and Easy Method with the Jews, p. 15. n.) but also excelled in divine wisdom, and in all the arts and sciences, particularly in that of architecture. "And Josephus tells us of a famous edifice built by

whilst living, his enemies would prevail after his decease with Cyrus, who himself died a few years afterwards, without, however, having further interfered in the Jewish affairs.*

On the decease of that monarch, he was succeeded by his son, the tyrant Cambyses, or Ahasuerus,† to whom the Samaritans immediately wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem;‡ but of which he does not appear to have taken any notice.§

Cambyses was succeeded by the usurper, Smerdis the Magian, or Artaxerxes,‖ and to him wrote the Samaritans, or various collected nations, whom the great and noble Asnapper, or Esarhaddon,¶ brought over and set in the cities of Samaria; Thy servants, the men on this side the river, and at such a time, be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations. Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and

Baris, which is the same name by which Daniel himself calls the castle or palace at Shushan or Susa. For what we translate at Shushan in the palace, is, in the original, Beshushan Habirah, where no doubt the Birah of Daniel is the same with the Baris of Josephus, and both signify this palace or castle there built by Daniel, while he was governor of that province; for there he did the king's business, i. e.—was governor for the king of Babylon." Prid. i. 207, 208.

* Prid. i. 210. † Ezra, iv. 6. Prid. i. 211.

‡ Ezra, iv. 6. § Prid. i. 211.

‖ Ezra, iv. 7. Prid. i. 219. "After the death of Cambyses, one of the Magi, named Oropæstus by Trogus Pompeius, Smerdis by Herodotus, Mardus by Æschylus, and Sphendatates by Ctesias, usurped the empire, feigning himself to be Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, who had been put to death." A. Clarke.

¶ Ezra, iv. 10. Scott in loco. Prid. i. 55.

so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings. Now because we have maintenance from the king's palace, and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore, have we sent and certified the king; that search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and princes, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time: for which cause was this city destroyed. We certify the king that, if this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.*

The Magian having directed the search to be made, had no difficulty in finding that Jerusalem had always been a rebellious city; and, therefore, wrote answer to the enemies of the Jews, Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me. Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings? Upon which they went up with their companions in haste, to the Jews at Jerusalem, and made them by force and power, to cease from the work of the house of Jehovah there.†

Artaxerxes, or Smerdis, having been discovered to be an impostor,‡ was assassinated by seven Persian nobles, one of whom, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, succeeded him upon the vacant throne.§

* Ezra, iv. 7—16. † Ezra, iv. 17—24.

‡ He was a Magian. Cyrus left a son of the name of Smerdis, whom Cambyses slew through envy. Smerdis the Magian had his ears cut off by Cyrus for some crime, and the nobles desired one of his women to let them know whether he had ears or not; by which they discovered that he was an impostor, and slew him. Prid. i. 218. 222. Where see how the sinful precautions of Cambyses led to his own ruin.

§ Prid. i. 226.

Either intimidated by the opposition they had met with, or really become indifferent to the great object of their restoration, the rebuilding of the temple, the restored Jews had rather employed themselves in building their own dwellings, and establishing their farms, and flocks, and herds, than in proceeding with that great and important work ;* wherefore, Haggai, the prophet, sent unto Zerubbabel and Jeshua, saying; Thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts. This people say, the time is not come, the time that Jehovah's house should be builded. Then came the word of Jehovah, by Haggai, the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now, therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is no warmth; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages, to put it into a bag with holes.

Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith Jehovah. Ye looked for much, and lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith Jehovah of Hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.†

Jehovah saw fit to employ the prophet Zechariah also,

* Scott in Hag. i. 2. Prid. i. 228.
† Hag. i. 2—11.

still further to excite and alarm this torpid people, saying Jehovah hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore, say thou unto them; Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith Jehovah of Hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith Jehovah of Hosts. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith Jehovah. Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as Jehovah of Hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.*

Zerubbabel and his companions having shewn a spirit of submission to the admonition of the prophets, Jehovah authorized Haggai to give them the following condescending declaration, I am with you, saith Jehovah;† and having stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and of all the remnant of the people, they proceeded in the work of the house of Jehovah of Hosts, their God.‡ And as a further encouragement to their diligence, the same prophet was ordered to deliver that magnificent prophecy of the Messiah, which modern Jews have ever found one of the most difficult passages in the Old Testament to contend with; Speak now to Zerubbabel, and to Jeshua, saying, Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith Jehovah; and be strong, O Jeshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be

* Zech. i. 2—6. † Hag. i. 13.
‡ Hag. i. 14.

strong, all ye people of the land, saith Jehovah, and work; for I am with you, saith Jehovah of Hosts: according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. For thus saith Jehovah; yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land: and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of Hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of Hosts. *The glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of Hosts:* and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of Hosts.* I smote you with blasting, and with mildew, and with hail, in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith Jehovah. Consider now from this day and upwards, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the temple of Jehovah was laid, consider it. Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, have not brought forth: from this day will I bless you.

And again the word of Jehovah came unto Haggai, in the four and twentieth day of the month, saying, Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens, and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses, and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith Jehovah of Hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith Jehovah, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith Jehovah of Hosts.†

* Hag. ii. 2—9. The excellent Bp. Hall has a sermon on this text, Vol. v. 193.

† Hag. ii. 17—23.

The inveterate Samaritans, perceiving that the house of God was likely to be rebuilt notwithstanding all their machinations, and having excited the suspicions of Tatnai, the Persian governor of the province;* that officer, with Shetharboznai, who was probably the prefect of Samaria under him,† and their companions, came to the Jews; and Tatnai inquiring who had commanded them to build that house, and to make up those walls; and also, the names of the elders,‡ they replied, We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded, and set up. But after that our fathers had provoked the God of Heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon. But in the first year of Cyrus, the king of Babylon, the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God. And the vessels also of gold, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus, the king, take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; and said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place. Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God, which is in Jerusalem; and since that time, even until now, hath it been building, and yet it is not finished.§

The eye of their God being upon the elders of the Jews, so that their enemies could not cause them to cease,‖ Tatnai impressed with the simple account they gave, and probably

* Prid. i.229. † Prid. i. 229.
‡ Ezra, v. 3, 4. 9, 10. § Ezra, v. 11—16. ‖ Ezra, v. 5.

out of respect for the memory of Cyrus; instead of proceeding of his own authority to put a stop to their labours, thought it best to write an account of the whole affair to Darius, his sovereign. "Be it known unto the king, that we went into the province of Judah, to the house of the great God, which is builded with stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands; and then relating the inquiries he had made, and their answers, he adds; Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus, the king, to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter."*

Darius having received this letter, ordered a search to be made for the decree of Cyrus among the records at Babylon; but not being, as is supposed, found in that city, he directed the search to be pursued at Achmetha,† or Ecbatana,‡ the capital of Media, where it was found, and where Cyrus, therefore, probably was when he pronounced the decree.§

Upon this discovery, Darius immediately directed an edict to Tatnai, Shethar-boznai, and his companions, the Apharsachites,‖ to let the work of this house of God alone; "Let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews, build this house of God in his place. Moreover, I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of Heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil,

* Ezra, v. 5—17. † Ezra, vi. 2.

‡ Wells, i. 101. Prid. i. 50. 61. 218. 231. "A summer palace of the kings of Persia, in India." A. Clarke.

§ Scott in loco. Prid. i. 231. ‖ See post in the reign of Hoshea.

according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of Heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons.

Also, I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there, destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God, which is at Jerusalem. I, Darius, have made a decree; let it be done with speed."*

Tatnai, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, immediately made the Jews acquainted with this command; and the Jews proceeded rapidly with the building of the temple, so that it was completed in three years.†

And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, and offered at the dedication of this house of God, an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and, for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem: as it is written in the book of Moses.‡

Then too did the redeemed of Jehovah sing, Praise ye Jehovah. Praise Jehovah, O my soul. While I live will I

* Ezra, vi. 6—12.

† Ezra, vi. 13—15. "The publishing of this decree at Jerusalem may be reckoned the thorough restoration of the Jewish state; and from the thorough destruction of it, in the burning of the city and temple of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, to this time is just seventy years." Prid. i. 232.

‡ Ezra, vi. 16—18. Numb. iii. 6. viii. 9.

praise Jehovah. I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah, his God: who made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: who keepeth truth for ever: who executeth judgment for the oppressed: who giveth food to the hungry. Jehovah looseth the prisoners: Jehovah openeth the eyes of the blind: Jehovah raiseth them that are bowed down: Jehovah loveth the righteous: Jehovah preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow; but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down. Jehovah shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye Jehovah.

Praise ye Jehovah: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. Jehovah doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. Great is Jehovah, and of great power: his understanding is infinite. Jehovah lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground. Sing unto Jehovah with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp, unto our God: who covereth the heaven with clouds; who prepareth rain for the earth; who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. Jehovah taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. Praise Jehovah, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the

wheat. He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth, his word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow. He sheweth his word unto Jacob; his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye Jehovah.

Praise ye Jehovah. Praise ye Jehovah from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of Jehovah: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. Praise Jehovah from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word: mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: kings of the earth, and all people: princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: let them praise the name of Jehovah: for his name alone is excellent: his glory is above the earth and heaven. He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye Jehovah.*

The temple being thus rebuilt, and the Jewish polity in a measure restored, the captives who remained in Babylon

* Ps. cxlvi. cxlvii. cxlviii. "In the Septuagint version these psalms are styled the Psalms of Haggai and Zechariah, as if they had been composed by them for this occasion; and this no doubt was from some ancient tradition." Prid. i. 239.

doubted the propriety of continuing the observance of those fasts, which they had strictly kept during the last seventy years; and, therefore, sent Sherezer and Regemmelech, to pray before Jehovah, and consult the priests and prophets, whether they should weep in the fifth month, and separate themselves as they had done so many years.*

To this inquiry, God saw fit by the prophet Zechariah, to vouchsafe the following answer; Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying; When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves? Should ye not hear the words which Jehovah hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the south and the plain?

Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassion every man to his brother; and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which Jehovah of Hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets; therefore, came a great wrath from Jehovah of Hosts. Therefore, it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear; saith Jehovah of Hosts: but I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

* Zech. vii. 1—3.

I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. Thus saith Jehovah; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth, and the mountain of Jehovah of Hosts, the holy mountain. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith Jehovah of Hosts. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country: and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.

Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of Jehovah of Hosts was laid, that the temple might be built. For before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in, because of the affliction: for I set all men every one against his neighbour. But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith Jehovah of Hosts. For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong. For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; as I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me

to wrath, saith Jehovah of Hosts, and I repented not: so again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah: fear ye not. These are the things that ye shall do; speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour: execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith Jehovah. The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy, and gladness, and chearful feasts; therefore, love the truth and peace.

Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, let us go speedily to pray before Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of Hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*

The ensuing passover was kept with great solemnity, for the priests and Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren, the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek Jehovah, the God of Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for Jehovah had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto

* Zech. vii. viii.

them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.*

Darius, the Mede, or Darius Hystaspes, was succeeded by his son, Xerxes, during whose reign, comprising a period of twenty-one years, nothing is recorded in Holy Scripture relative to the proceedings of the Jews;† but early in the following reign of Artaxerxes Longimannus, or Ahasuerus,‡ that remarkable transaction took place, which, by raising Hadassah,§ to the bed of the sovereign, produced a favourable impression towards the Jewish nation in the mind of that prince.‖

In the seventh year of the reign of this monarch, Ezra, the scribe, obtained a decree from him, for the more complete restoration of the residue of the captivity to their own land; for Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.¶

Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time. I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests, and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine

* Ezra, vi. 20. 22.

† Josephus alleges that the tribute from the Samaritans, which had been first granted by Cyrus, and twice renewed by Darius, was again confirmed by Xerxes. Vol. ii. 104.

‡ For the critical discussion as to who this monarch actually was, see Prid. i. 308. "The Hebrews write that divers of the kings of Persia were called Artaxerxes, (or, according to the Hebrew, Artahshashte) as Pharaoh was a common name of the kings of Egypt, and Cæsar of the emperors of Rome." Barker.

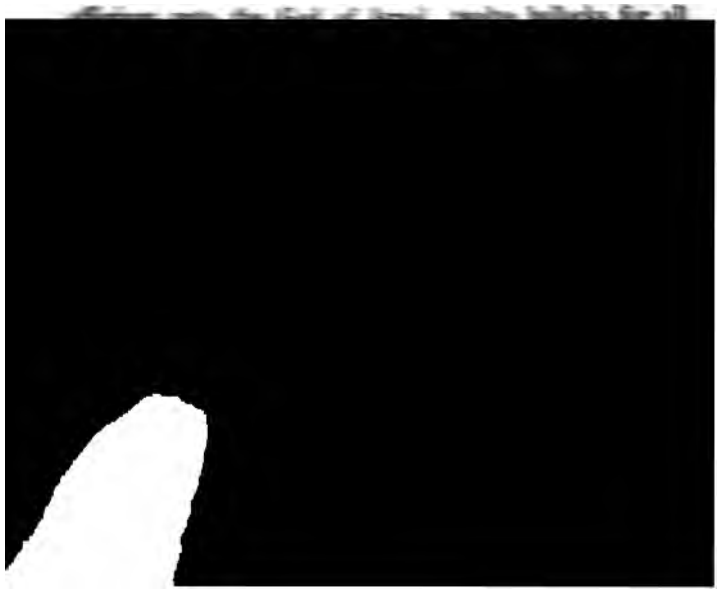
§ Gray's Key, 222. ‖ Est. i. ii. ¶ Ezra, vii. 1—10.

hand; and to carry the silver and gold which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem, and all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem. And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God. The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem. And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out of the king's treasure house. And I, even I, Artaxerxes, the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra, the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

Also, we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims,* or ministers of this house of God; it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom upon them. And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, who may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them

* "So called because they were given to the temple, to cut wood and bear water, for the use of the sacrifices, and came of the Gibeonites, who were appointed to this use by Joshua, ix. 23." BARKER.

[redacted]



daughters for themselves, and for their sons, so that the holy seed had mingled themselves with the people of those lands, and that even the hand of the princes and rulers had been chief in the trespass; wherefore, this holy servant of God rent his garment, and his mantle, and so great was his grief, as well it might, that he plucked off the hair of his head, and of his beard, and sat down astonished. Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonied until the evening sacrifice.

And at the evening sacrifice, I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto Jehovah, my God, and said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens, since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day: and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. And now, for a little space, grace hath been shewed from Jehovah, our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem. And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, the land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean

land, with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another, with their uncleanness. Now, therefore, give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever. And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? O Jehovah, the God of Israel, thou art righteous; for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.*

Now, when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men, and women, and children: for the people wept very sore, and answered, and said unto Ezra, we have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now, therefore, let us make a covenant with our God, to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.†

Having exacted an oath from the chief priests, the Levites,

* Ezra, ix. 4—15. † Ezra, x. 3, 4.

and all Israel, that they would do according to his word, and associated with himself, Jonathan, and Jahaziah, they made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem, to gather themselves to Jerusalem within three days, upon pain of forfeiting all their substance, and the benefit of the restoration.*

When assembled, Ezra thus addressed them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now, therefore, make confession unto Jehovah, the God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives. Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, as thou hast said, so must we do.†

After a careful and solemn examination of every family, Ezra proceeded with the work of separation, and which appears to have been universally submitted to, although many of them had children by these strange women.‡

Mordecai, the uncle of Hadassah, and who seems to have anticipated that his niece was preordained to render some especial service to her nation, in the exercise of holy faith, had walked patiently, but no doubt anxiously, every day before the court of the women's house, in the palace of Shushan, to know how Hadassah did, and what should become of her;§ and upon

* Ezra, x. 6—8. † Ezra, x. 9—12.

‡ Ezra, x. 18—44. "According to a passage in Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew, Ezra offered a paschal lamb on this occasion, and addressed the people thus: 'This passover is our saviour and our refuge; and if ye will be persuaded of it, and let it enter into your hearts, that we are to humble to him in a sign, and afterwards shall believe in him, this place shall not be destroyed for ever, saith Jehovah of Hosts; but if ye will not believe in him, nor hearken to his preaching, ye shall be a laughing-stock to the Gentiles.'—Dial. cum Tryphone, sec. 72. This passage, Justin says, the Jews, through their enmity to Christ, blotted out of the book of Ezra. He charges them with cancelling several other places, through the same spirit of enmity and opposition." A. Clarke.

§ Est. ii. 11.

her advancement to the throne,* was raised to sit in the king's gate, or seat of judgment.† Whilst fulfilling the duties of his office, he discovered a conspiracy against the life of Ahasuerus, by Bigthan and Teresh, two of his own chamberlains, and which he defeated by communicating it to the monarch through Hadassah; upon which both the traitors were hanged.‡ And soon afterwards, by the same instrumentality, was the malignant purpose of Haman, the Agagite, defeated, which aimed at the destruction of the whole nation of the Jews, throughout the empire; but which was so overruled by their provident and almighty benefactor, that Mordecai was invested with the supreme authority under the monarch, and the event of their signal deliverance has been celebrated ever since, by all their descendants in the well known feast of Purim.§ So Mordecai, the Jew, was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.‖

Notwithstanding all the encouragements which the restored Jews had experienced, they were far from being in a state of comfort, or security; for in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, Hanani, and others of his brethren,

* Est. ii. 17—19.

† "Where the king's officers usually attended to receive the royal commands." A. Clarke.

‡ Est. ii. 21—23.

§ Est. iii.—x. Prid. i. 381. For a minute account of the ceremonies and practices (some of them not very reputable) with which the modern Jews keep this festival, see the notes of A. Clarke at the end of the book of Esther, Picart's Religious Ceremonies, vol. i. 221., Basnage's History of the Jews, 452. Dr. Jennings's Jewish Antiq. ii. 305.

‖ Est. x. 3. Burder gives extracts from several modern travellers, of the actual existence of the tombs of Esther and Mordecai, which seem better entitled to credence than such matters usually are. O. L. No. 665.

came to Nehemiah, in the palace at Shushan,* where he filled the office of cupbearer,† and informed him that the remnant that were left of the captivity at Jerusalem, were in great affliction and reproach; that the wall of Jerusalem also was broken down, and the gates thereof were burnt with fire.‡

On receiving this information, the holy man gives us the following relation of his feeling, When I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven, and said, I beseech thee, O Jehovah, the God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him, and observe his commandments: let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel, thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned: we have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandest thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress I will scatter you abroad among the nations: but if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them: though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. Now these are thy servants, and thy people, whom thou has redeemed by thy great power, and by thy

* Nehem. i. 1—3. "The ancient city of Susa, called in Persian, Shuster; the winter residence of the Persian Kings." A. Clarke.

† Nehem. 1—11.

‡ Nehem. i. 3. See a more minute account of this interview in Jos. i. 109.

strong hand. O Jehovah, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.*

On his next attendance upon the monarch, having exhibited great grief of countenance, Artaxerxes enquired into the cause, upon which Nehemiah replied, Let the king live for ever, why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my father's sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?†

The monarch having encouraged him to prefer his request, Nehemiah prayed unto the God of heaven, and then said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my father's sepulchres, that I may build it.‡

Artaxerxes, whose queen, probably Hadassah, was present at this interview, having stipulated for the return of this esteemed officer, within a limited period, gave him permission to go; and, at his request, the good hand of his God being upon him, furnished him with letters from himself, to the governors beyond the river, that they should convey him over till he came into Judah; and a letter unto Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, to give him timber to make beams for the gates of the palace, which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house he should enter into. And being furnished with a considerable military escort, Nehemiah came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters,§ and then went to Jerusalem, and staid there three days.‖

The arrival of Nehemiah with a commission to seek the

* Nehem. i. 4—11. † Nehem. ii. 3.
‡ Nehem. ii. 4—5. § Nehem. ii. 6—9. ‖ Nehem. ii. 11.

welfare of the children of Israel, having excited the regret and envy of Sanballat, the Horonite, and Tobiah, an Ammonite slave,* and the rest of the Samaritans, induced this good man to act with great caution; so that without consulting the rulers and principal Jews, he surveyed the walls and suburbs of the city himself by night, and made the necessary observations.†

Having ascertained the state of the city, and what was necessary to be done, Nehemiah assembled the Jews, and thus addressed them; Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. He then told them of the hand of his God, which was good upon him, and also the king's words which he had spoken unto him, whereupon the people said, let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work. But when Sanballat, the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, what is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king? then answered I them, and said unto them, the God of Heaven, he will prosper us; therefore, we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.‡

Notwithstanding this opposition, the work proceeded; different individuals applying themselves to the erection of various portions of the gates and walls.§

* Nehem. ii. 10. He had discovered that in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them. For there were many in Judah sworn unto him, because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah, the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam, the son of Berechiah. Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear. Nehem. vi. 17—19.

† Nehem. ii. 12—16. ‡ Nehem ii. 17. 20. § Nehem. iii.

The opposition and insult of Sanballat, Tobiah, and their adherents continuing, Nehemiah solemnly imprecated upon them the divine vengeance, Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity: and cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee:* for they have provoked thee to anger before the

* As to this and similar imprecations, to be found in the Psalms of David, and other parts of the Old Testament Scriptures, Dr. A. Clarke has the following note. "A prayer of this kind, understood literally, is not lawful for any Christian. Jesus, our great master, has said, 'Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.' Probably we should understand such terrible imprecations as *declaratory;* for the same form of the verb, in the Hebrew, is used as *precative* and *imperative.* All who know the genius of the Hebrew language, know that the *future* tense is used to express all these senses. Besides, we may rest assured that Nehemiah's curses, or declaration of God's judgments, had respect only to their bodies, and to this life; not to their souls, and the world to come. And then they amount to no more than this, What a man soweth that shall he reap."—A. Clarke. "The Jews were at this time the church of God; they were actually employed in his service; their enemies, without the smallest ground of complaint, despised and hated them for his sake: if they succeeded in their designs they would subvert true religion; and their condign punishment would form a salutary example to all other adversaries, and subserve the cause of truth and righteousness. So that, zeal for the honour of God, and love to his people, induced Nehemiah to pray that these scorners might be exposed to that reproach which they cast on the Jews, and become a prey to their enemies in the land of their captivity; and that their sins might not be covered, or blotted out, by the merciful forgiveness of God; seeing they had endeavoured to discourage the builders, and render them disaffected to their work. Such scriptural reports are prophetical, or declaratory of the judgments of God, against persecutors; and the subsequent doom of these nations was an answer to this prayer."—Scott.

builders. So they built the wall, and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof; for the people had a mind to work.*

The persecution from the Samaritans having continued, Nehemiah was obliged to divide the people, one half working at the wall, whilst the other half kept watch; each man having a sword in one hand, whilst working with the other, and trumpeters being placed at regular distances to give notice of the approach of an enemy. But, although their adversaries conspired all of them together, to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it, Nehemiah and his brethren made their prayers unto their God, and set a watch against them day and night: neither Nehemiah himself, nor his brethren, nor his servants, nor the men of the guard putting off their clothes, save for washing.†

Many of the people having, in order to support the expense of the works and maintain their families in the interim, mortgaged‡ their lands to their brethren beyond the hope of redemption; Nehemiah was excessively angry, and having assembled them together, and shewn them how disinterestedly

* Nehem. iv. 1—6. † Nehem. iv. 7—23.

‡ If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. Exod. xxii. 25. The usury which Nehemiah now reproved was taking one per cent., or a centessima, from the borrower. Nehem. v. 1—14. Prid. i. 437. If an Israelite might not take one per cent. from his brother, how shall the disciple of Christ escape who takes five? But perhaps it will be asked, who then could lend? Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, the seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto Jehovah against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Deut. xv. 9. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Matt. v. 42, Mark, x. 17—28. John, vi. 60.

he had acted himself, and reproached them for their usurious conduct, urged them instantly to restore their lands, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil that they had exacted of them. Upon these usurers having promised to restore all, Nehemiah exacted an oath of them, to keep their promise, and shaking his lap said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised Jehovah.*

Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, still persevered in their opposition, and made use of every exertion and artifice to defeat the object of Nehemiah, and thwart the purposes of Jehovah. Four times they sent for this servant of God to meet them in private, most probably with a view to assassinate him; then they sent to him, threatening to accuse him that he was about to restore the sceptre of Judah, and rebel against Artaxerxes: afterwards they bribed Shemaiah to impose upon Nehemiah, and alarm him by a false prophecy, besides keeping up an intercourse with several of the nobles of Judah, who laboured to divert Nehemiah from his purpose, and impress his mind favourably towards Sanballat and Tobiah. Having surmounted all these obstacles, the wall was finished at the end of fifty two days; and it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.†

Nehemiah was Tirshatha,‡ or governor of the province, but when the wall was built, he appointed as viceroys in his

* Nehem. v. 1—13. † Nehem. vi. 1—19. ‡ Nehem. viii. 9.

absence,* or as deputies under him over Jerusalem, his brother Hanani, and Hananiah, the ruler of the palace, a faithful man, and one who feared God above many; and gave them a strict charge how to guard the city, and prevent any surprize from their enemies.†

As a measure of further precaution and of future prosperity, he prevailed on the nobles and rulers, and a tenth of the rest, to erect residences in Jerusalem,‡ and the remaining nine parts, in the other cities of Judah.§

With a view to this, Nehemiah numbered and registered all the people according to their genealogies ;‖ voluntarily giving himself one thousand drams of gold, fifty basins, and five hundred and thirty chief garments, an example which was liberally followed by the chief of the fathers, and the rest of the people.¶

Ezra, whose commission appears to have ceased on the arrival of Nehemiah, is supposed** to have employed the interval chiefly in collecting and preparing a copy of the law of Moses; and which, having blessed Jehovah the great God, the people answering Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands, and bowing their heads and worshipping Jehovah, with their faces to the ground, he and the priests and Levites

* He had only leave of absence for a prescribed period, and was obliged to return to Persia for a new commission. Nehem. ii. 6. xiii. 6. Prid. i. 437.

† Nehem. vii. 1—3. ‡ Nehem. xi. 1—19.

§ Nehem. xi. 20—36.

‖ Nehem. vii. 6—69. See also Ezra, ii. throughout. None but a high priest with urim and thummim could consult by immediate revelation with God, and none such was vouchsafed under the second temple. Scott on Ezra, ii. 63. Nehem. vii. 65. Lev. viii. 8. Deut. xxxiii. 8. As to what the urim and thummim was, and its use, see Prid. i. 193—201.

¶ Nehem. vii. 70—73.

** Prid. i. 431.

read distinctly, and gave the law, or expounded, and caused them to understand it.*

This being done on the feast of trumpets,† Nehemiah and Ezra dismissed the people, who were weeping when they heard the words of the law, at mid-day; telling them, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God, mourn not nor weep; go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of Jehovah is your strength. So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.‡

On the next day the reading of the law was resumed, when coming in course to the ordinance of the feast of tabernacles,§ the people forthwith collected olive branches, pine branches, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of thick trees; and went forth and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun, unto that day, had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.‖

And during the whole seven days of the feast of trumpets, Ezra continued reading and expounding the law to the people.¶

* Nehem. viii. 1—8.
† Lev. xxiii. 24.
‡ Nehem. viii. 9—12.
§ Lev. xxiii. 33.
‖ Nehem. viii. 13—17.
¶ Nehem. viii. 18.

Two days afterwards they held a solemn fast, when having first separated from themselves all strangers,* the Levites stood up and cried with a loud voice, Stand up and bless Jehovah, your God, for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee. Thou art Jehovah, the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur, of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; and foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous and didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the red sea; and shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knowest that they dealt proudly against them. So didst thou get thee a name as it is this day. And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters.

Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire,† to give them light in the

* Nehem. ix. 2. xiii. 1—3.

† "This miraculous cloud, the symbol of the Divine Presence, assumed *three* different positions while accompanying the Israelitish camp. 1. As a cloud, in the form of a *pillar*, it went before them, when they journeyed, to point out their way in the wilderness. 2. As a pillar of *fire*, it continued with them during the *night*, to give them light, and be a rallying point for the whole camp in the night

way wherein they should go. Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: and madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant: and gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them. But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments, and refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not. Yea, when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations; yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go; thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing: their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.

Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them into corners: so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of

season. 3. As an *extended cloud*, it *hovered over them* in their encampments, to refresh them with its dews, and to keep them from the ardour of the sun." A. Clarke.

Og, king of Bashan. Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it. So the children went in and possessed the land, and thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would. And they took strong cities, and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and olive-yards, and fruit trees in abundance; so they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness. Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs; and slew thy prophets which testified against them, to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations. Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies. But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven: and many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies; and testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do he shall live in them); and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear. Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands. Nevertheless for thy great

mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.

Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day. Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly: neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments, and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them. For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: and it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also, they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress.*

This solemn and beautiful confession† being completed,

* Nehem. ix. 1—37.

† With this compare Deut. xxxii. 1—43. Josh. xxiv. 2—28. Ps. lxxviii. and cvii. Acts, vii. 2—53. "This chapter is not only a most curious abridgment of the sacred history, from Abraham to the state of the Jews after their captivity, but an exhibition of sound faith and sober piety; or to speak in modern language, it contains the Jerusalem confession, or articles of true religion; to which the whole Jewish state set their hands and seals: or, again to use a modern term, they subscribed. One remarkable part of this confession is in v. 6.—"The host of heaven worshippeth thee;" by which a protest is universally entered into against all idolatry, and from which the Jews

Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, and all the princes, Levites, priests, and people, entered and sealed a covenant, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law which was given by Moses, the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of Jehovah, our Lord, and his judgments, and his statutes; and that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons: and if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holyday: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt. Also, we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God; for the shewbread, and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual burnt offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings, to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God. And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of Jehovah, our God, as it is written in the law: and to bring the first-fruits of our ground, and the first-fruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of Jehovah: also the first-born of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law; and the firstlings of our herds, and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God: and

remarkably and rigorously abstained after the captivity, and continue so to do, even to this day, and it is hoped will for ever, to the completion of the prophecy of Isaiah, lxv. 16.—"Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth. I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And those predictions of the other prophets."—ANSELM BAYLEY.

that we should bring the first-fruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine, and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. And the priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house. For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers where are the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers, and we will not forsake the house of our God.*

* Nehem. ix. 38. x. The editor cannot conscientiously omit, and, therefore offers no apology for inserting, the following note.—"Here was a glorious revolution; and had they been faithful to it, they had been a great and good people to the present day. But what is implied in, *We will not forsake the house of our God?*—I answer.

I. The church of God is the house of God; there He has his constant *dwelling*-place.

II. True believers are His *family* in this house; and this family consists of, 1. *Fathers* and *mothers*. 2. *Young persons*. 3. *Little children*. And, 4. *Servants*.

III. The ministers of the word of God are the officers and overseers of this house and family.

IV. The worship of God is the grand employment of this family.

V. The ordinances of God are the *food* of the members of this family; or the means of their spiritual support.

VI. Those who do not *forsake* the house of their God are those; 1. Who continue in the faith. 2. Who grow in grace. 3. Who labour in the vineyard. 4. Who bring forth fruit. 5. Who conscientiously attend all the ordinances. And, 6. Who take care that the offerings to the house of God shall be duly made; providing for those who labour in the word and doctrine.

After the completion of these various works, Nehemiah held a solemn dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, and sought out the Levites to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps. And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi; also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem. And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

Nehemiah then brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks, whereof one went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dung gate; and at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward. And the other company of them that gave thanks went over against them, and Nehemiah after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the tower of the furnaces even unto the broad wall; and from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate, and they stood still in the prison gate. So stood the two companies* of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and Nehemiah,

VII. Reader, 1. Art thou *of* this house? 2. Art thou *in* this house? 3. To what part *of* the family dost thou belong? 4. Art thou still an infant *in* this house? 5. Dost thou attend the ordinances *of* this house? 6. Hast thou *forsaken* this house? These questions are of great importance; answer them as in the sight of God." A. CLARKE.

* That is, each company went half round the wall. A. CLARKE.

and the half of the rulers with him; and the priests, with trumpets; and the singers sang loud, with Jezrahiah, their overseer. Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off. And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon, his son. For in the days of David and Asaph, of old, there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise, and thanksgiving to God.*

Having occupied his station as Tirshatha, with the greatest credit to himself and benefit to his countrymen, for a period of twelve years,† Nehemiah returned to the court of Arta-

* Nehem. xii. 27—46.

† Nehem. xiii. 6. "During all the time that he had been in this government, he managed it with great justice, and supported the dignity of his office, through these whole twelve years, with a very expensive and hospitable magnificence. For there sat at his table every day one hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, besides strangers who came to Jerusalem, from among the heathen nations that were round about them; for as occasions brought them thither, if they were of any quality, they were always invited to the governor's house, and there hospitably and splendidly entertained. So that there were provided for him every day one ox, six choice sheep, and fowls, and wine, and all other things in proportion hereto, which could not but amount to a great expense. Yet all this he bore through these whole twelve years out of his own private purse, without burdening the province at all for it, or taking any part of that allowance, which before was raised out of it by other governors to support them in their station; which argues his great generosity, as well as his great love and tenderness to the people of his nation, in thus easing them of this burden, and also his vast wealth in being able so to do The office which he had been in at court gave him the opportunity of amassing great riches, and he thought he could not better expend them than in the service of his country, and by

xerxes; from which, however, he again revisited Judea, but how long afterwards is uncertain.

During his absence, Eliashib, the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of the house of God, and being allied* to Tobiah, had not only received him into the city, but prepared for him a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests.†

As soon as Nehemiah had discovered this act of impiety, it grieved him sore; and he therefore cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber, and commanded the chamber to be cleansed; and brought thither again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering, and the frankincense.‡

Nehemiah also found that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field. Then he contended with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And he gathered them together, and set them in their place. Then he brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil, unto the treasuries. And he made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah, the priest, and Zadok, the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan, the son of Zaccur, the son of

doing all he could to promote the true interest of it both in church and state; and God prospered him in the work, according to the great zeal with which he laboured in it." Prid. i. 465, 466. Nehem. v. 18, 19. And see A. Clarke.

* It does not appear that there was any family alliance, but merely one of confederacy, in conjunction with Sanballat. Prid. i. 472.

† Nehem. xiii. 4, 5. ‡ Nehem. xiii. 7—9.

Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren.*

So little impression, too, had the reading of the law and their own continued misfortunes made upon this rebellious race,† that Nehemiah actually saw, in Judah, some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.‡ Then he contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

And it came to pass that, when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, he commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of his servants set he at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on

* Nehem. xiii. 10—14.

† Experience and reflection will compel us all to exclaim that the whole human race are equally guilty, and alike given to backslide, as soon as the judgments of God are withdrawn from them; and in how short a time this takes place would be surprising indeed, did we not know the more surprising depravity of the human heart.

‡ It never entered into the head of this zealous servant of the Most High, nor had he skill enough in the knowledge of the decalogue to discover what the legislators of Christian Britain, including her bishops, have so conveniently found out; viz. that the sale of mackerel and milk were legitimate exceptions to the obligations imposed by the fourth commandment!

the sabbath day. So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. Then he testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? If ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth, came they no more on the sabbath.* And he commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.†

Furthermore, he found Jews who had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And he contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. Did not Solomon, king of Israel, sin by these things? Yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless, even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?‡

Cotemporary with the tirshathate of Nehemiah was the prophet Malachi, who, as God was now about to withdraw from them his prophets, and those peculiar manifestations of his own mind and will, with which he had favoured them for

* This shews how easily the most confirmed and settled violations of the law of God, may be restrained or overcome, if professors of Christianity will but act with firmness and decision, tempered however with judgment and discretion.

† Nehem. xiii. 15—22. ‡ Nehem. xiii. 23—27.

so many ages, but which they had as universally neglected and despised, was commissioned to point out to them the former loving kindnesses of Jehovah; and that the distinguishing privileges which they had enjoyed were not owing to themselves, or to their own character, or even to their descent from Abraham.* After charging the people with offering up mutilated or blemished sacrifices, and contemning the sabbaths and ordinances of God,† he reproached the priests especially, for the example they had set in breaking their covenant, in marrying strange wives; and threatened them with destruction and punishment.‡

Then shewing them their insincerity and hyprocrisy towards each other in their general transactions, and their nuptial infidelity and illegal divorces,§ he declared that they had wearied Jehovah with their practices and their proud reasonings.‖

God, however, who seeth not as man seeth, discerned that there was still a small remnant left, disposed to seek and to serve him. Nothwithstanding, therefore, the general melancholy picture, this prophecy contains an affectionate remonstrance to this remnant, an impressive submission on their part, and a most gracious promise in consequence. "Even from the days of your fathers, ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith Jehovah of Hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall

* Mal. i. 5. † Mal. i. 6—14. ‡ Mal. ii. 1—9.

§ And may not persons professing the religion of Jesus Christ, even in our own country, well tremble, lest they too should be found in this condemnation? Alas! alas! for the nobles and great ones of our land, and the example they set to those below them.

‖ Mal. ii. 17. iii. 13—15. Would not one think the prophet was describing the state of society in Britain at the present day? How closely does one nation and people follow after another, in the concerns of life, to their common and final doom!

we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith Jehovah of Hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith Jehovah of Hosts. Your words have been stout against me, saith Jehovah. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?

"For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith Jehovah of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings: and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith Jehovah of Hosts."*

As an appropriate conclusion to the last prophecy that was to be delivered, and that the intervening ages might not be destitute either of an encouraging promise or a warning monitor, this prophet then delivers the following splendid prediction of the Messiah Saviour: Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and Jehovah, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple,

* Mal. iii. 7—13. iv. 1—3.

even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith Jehovah of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap; and he shall sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto Jehovah an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah, as in the days of old, and as in former years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of Hosts. For I am Jehovah, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

But that they might be left without excuse, and that an additional warning might be given them, the prophet adds, Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of Jehovah: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.†

With the transactions in which Ezra and Nehemiah were engaged ends the historical, and with Malachi the prophetical, canon of the Old Testament scriptures; for all the prophets, as we have seen, flourished during or previous to that period. We must now, therefore, forsake our unerring

* Mal. iii. 1—6. See this prophecy explained and illustrated by Dr. Gill, on the Messiah, and W. Harris's Practical Sermons, 561—591.

† Mal. iv. 4—6.

guide, and collect the intervening history of this interesting people from sources which, however correct, are destitute of that divine authority which is entitled to *command* belief.

THE PRIESTHOOD.

Nehemiah is supposed to have held the government of Judea till his death, of which we have no account, and that after his decease, that country was added to the prefecture of Syria, under whom the successive high priests administered the affairs of the Jewish nation.*

Eliasbib held that sacred office in the time of Nehemiah,† and on the death of Joiada, it devolved upon his son, Johanan, or Jonathan.‡

During this latter pontificate, the people incurred a severe punishment from the misconduct of Johanan; for Jeshua, his brother, having insinuated himself into the favour of Bagoses, then prefect of Syria, obtained from him a grant of the high priesthood, with which Johanan had already been invested some years. On coming to Jerusalem, and attempting to assume the duties of the priesthood by force, Johanan opposed him with equal violence; and in the contest, Johanan slew his brother, in the inner court of the temple, thereby committing alike the crimes of murder and profanation.

When Bagoses was informed of this transaction, he came to Jerusalem, and was proceeding into the temple to take cognizance of the fact. Upon its being represented to him, that his entrance therein as a gentile would be esteemed a profanation, he exclaimed, What! am I not more pure than

* Prid. i. 503. † Nehem. iii. 1. xii. 22.
‡ Nehem. xii. 22. Prid i. 538.

the dead carcass of the man you have slain? And then proceeding into the temple itself, and examining the merits of the case, he imposed a fine, which is estimated at from £1,150. to £1,750. per annum, which continued about seven years afterwards.*

During the same pontificate, Ochus, who had succeeded Artaxerxes Mnemon on the throne of Persia,† having quelled the revolt in Phœnicia, and reduced the city of Sidon to ashes,‡

* Prid. i. 541. 543. Josephus calls Joiada, Judas; Johanan, John; Jos. ii. 128. Antiq. xi. 7.

† Prid. i. 547.

‡ This was probably one of the oldest cities in the world, and named after the eldest son of Canaan. (Gen. x. 15. 19.) It was also a great city. (Josh. xi. 8. xix. 28.) She was the mother of Old Tyre, (Is. xxiii. 12. Newton, i. 175.); and she is included in most* of the denunciations against both Old and New Tyre; but there is one which seems peculiar to herself, and to foretel this very siege and its results. "Son of man set thy face against Zidon, and prophesy against it, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, O Zidon, and I will be glorified in the midst of thee, and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her. For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets, and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side, and they shall know that I am Jehovah." Ezek. xxviii. 21, 22, 23. "Tennes was at this time king of Zidon, and he had with him Mentor, the Rhodian, with four thousand Greek mercenaries; but on the approach of Ochus, both the one and the other betrayed the Zidonians, and allowed the Persians to come into the city, which was well fortified both by land and by sea. The inhabitants, finding themselves thus betrayed, retired into their houses, set fire to them over their own heads, and no less than forty thousand men, besides women and children, were destroyed; and last of all, Ochus put Tennes himself to death. There were such vast quantities of gold and silver in Sidon when this calamity happened, and which was all melted down by the flames, that Ochus sold the ashes of the ruined city for great sums of money." Prid. i. 553. Un. Hist. i. 411. So true is it that the goods of the wicked shall flow

* Is. xxiii. 2. 4. Jer. xlvii. 4. Ezek. xxxii. 30. Joel, iii. 4. Zech. ix. 2.

marched against the Jews who had sided with the Phœnicians; and having besieged and taken Jericho, made many captives, and led part of them with him into Egypt, and sent a great number of others into Hyrcania, and there planted them on those parts of that country which lay on the Caspian Sea.*

On the death of Johanan, he was succeeded in the priesthood by his son Jaddua,† during whose pontificate, that extraordinary transaction with Alexander the Great took place, which, although it rests on the testimony of Josephus alone, appears to have obtained general credit amongst learned men.

Philip, king of Macedon, having reduced the states of Greece to submission to his authority, and procured himself to be appointed captain general of the whole territory, engaged in a war with the Persians; and was about to join his army, when he was assassinated by one of his own subjects, just at the moment he was impiously assuming the power and authority of the Deity.‡

Alexander, his son, succeeded to his throne and authority over Greece; and after a short interval marched with thirty thousand foot and five thousand horse to Sestus, and thence crossed the Hellespont into Asia, with a view to the conquest of the Persian empire.§

Having defeated the Persian army at the battle of Granicum,

away in the day of the wrath of Jehovah. Job, xx. 28. See an interesting account of Sidon, the modern Seyda, in Buckingham's Travels amongst the Arabs, pp. 385—433.

* Prid. i. 554. † Prid. i. 559.

‡ It is observed by Diodorus, that, in this solemnity, the images of twelve gods and goddesses being carried before him into the theatre, he added his own for the thirteenth, dressed in the same pompous habit, whereby he vainly arrogated to himself the honour of a god; but he being slain as soon as this image entered the theatre, this very signally proved him to be a mortal. Prid. i. 561.

§ Prid. i. 563.

and afterwards Darius Codomanus himself, who then occupied the throne of Persia, in the straits of Issus; the conqueror traversed Phœnicia, and receiving the submission of the Sidonians, besieged New Tyre, the taking of which occupied him seven months.*

It was during this siege that Alexander applied to the Jews to supply him with provisions, and other necessaries, for the support of his army, and which they were in the habit of doing to the Tyrians; but the Jews pleaded their oath of allegiance to Darius, and refused to afford any assistance to the Macedonian monarch; who was so enraged at this contempt of his power, that after the conquest of Tyre, he marched towards Jerusalem, with the intention of inflicting similar punishments on the Jews, as he had already done on the Tyrians.

Jaddua, the high priest, being in no condition to offer resistance to the Macedonian cutthroat, had recourse to prayer, and with the people offered up oblations and sacrifices to God, who graciously listening thereto, and, no doubt, in reward for their upright adherence of their oath of allegiance,† directed Jaddua in a vision of the night, to go out and meet the conqueror in his pontifical robes, with the priests attending him in their proper habits, and all the people in white garments.

In compliance with this command, on the approach of

* Un. Hist. i. 418. 420. Rooke's Arian, i. 100. 104. Old Tyre, which was situated on the continent, was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, pursuant to the prophecy of Ezekiel, xxvi—xxxiii. The Tyrians had rebuilt their city (called New Tyre) on an island about four hundred fathoms in the sea, thinking themselves secure from such another attempt; but Alexander, from the ruins and rubbish of the old city, constructed a causeway to the island, and thereby succeeded in reducing it; and thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Zech. ix. 4—8. Jahn, i. 227. See all the prophecies relating to Tyre collected, and their fulfilment shewn and beautifully illustrated by Keith, 330—344.

† So true is it that God never allows any one to sustain injury for acting conscientiously.

Alexander, Jaddua and his companions proceeded to an eminence on the outside of Jerusalem, called Sapha. As soon as the monarch beheld this extraordinary assemblage, instead of issuing any sanguinary orders, he hastened toward Jaddua, and bowing down to him, saluted him with religious veneration, to the surprise of his own officers and army.

Parmenio, one of his generals, having enquired his reason for this conduct, Alexander told him that he did not pay adoration to Jaddua, but to Jaddua's God; for that when he was at Dio, in Macedonia, and there deliberating with himself how he should carry on his war against the Persians, and was in much doubt about the undertaking, this very person, and in this very habit, appeared to him in a dream, and encouraged him to lay aside all thoughtfulness and diffidence about this matter, and pass boldly over into Asia; promising him that God would be his guide in the expedition, and give him the empire of the Persians. And that therefore, on his seeing this person, and knowing by his habit, as well as by his shape and countenance, that he was the very same that appeared to him at Dio, he assured himself from hence, that he made the present war under the conduct of God, and should certainly, by his assistance, conquer Darius, and overthrow the Persian empire, and succeed in all things concerning it according to his desire; and that, therefore, in the person of this his high priest, he paid adoration unto him.*

Then kindly embracing Jaddua, he entered Jerusalem with him in a friendly manner, and offered sacrifices to God, in the temple;† and Jaddua having shewn him the prophecies‡ of Daniel, which predicted the overthrow of the Persian empire by a Grecian king, he asked what he could do to serve the nation of the Jews, and in compliance with their

* Prid. i. 560—571.

† Was not this pollution?

‡ Dan. viii. 21. xi. 3.

request, granted them the freedom of their country, laws, and religion, and that they should be exempted from paying tribute every sabbatical year.*

When Alexander returned from his conquests in India to Babylon, he proposed to restore the temple of Belus, which had been destroyed by Xerxes; and the various nations composing his army were employed, in their turns, to clear away the immense ruins of the ancient structure, erected by Nebuchadnezzar. Amongst the other nations there were some regiments of Jews, but they one and all refused to work, alleging that their religion would not allow them to assist in the restoration of an idolatrous temple. At first, Alexander was exceedingly angry, and inflicted severe punishments upon them for their disobedience, but finding them invincible in their purpose, and admiring their constancy, he gave them as a reward their free discharge, and sent them all home into their own country.†

* Prid. i. 571, 572. We have inserted this relation from Prideaux, who has adopted it from Josephus, b. xi. and also from Jahn, i. 230. 232.; but as no mention is made either in Quintus Curtius, Diodorus Siculus, or Arrian, of Alexander's visiting Jerusalem at all, we confess we are not without doubts of its authenticity. Still, however, as it is clear that Alexander marched from Tyre to Gaza, which he besieged, and thence into Egypt, it perhaps is hardly probable he would have passed by Jerusalem. That he did visit Jerusalem, see Un. Hist. ii. 162.; and both Arrian and Curtius assert that Alexander took all the cities of Syria. Jahn (Heb. Commonwealth, i. 233.) alleges that Q. Curtius alludes to a similar transaction; but there is nothing of the sort to be found in that author, although there is in the supplement of Freinshemius, book ii. chap. 11. propè finem; but which appears to be evidently transcribed from Josephus. Dr. Clarke treats this relation as authentic, but refers only to Josephus. Notes on Nehem. xii. 11.

† Prid. i. 603. This relation, too, rests on the sole authority of Josephus. As he was no friend to the Samaritans, and we are in-

By the conquests of Alexander, the thrones of Asia having been subverted, and its royal dynasties eradicated, on his decease, the supreme sovereign authority was vested in Aridæus, a bastard brother of Alexander, till Roxana's issue of a son should be able to assume the reigns of government; but Aridæus being an idiot, Perdiccas, another of Alexander's generals, was appointed a sort of regent, or protector over the whole empire;* and all the immense territories of this mighty monarch, after a multitude of assassination and contention, were divided amongst his remaining general officers; in which division, Egypt was assigned to Ptolemy, and Syria, Phœnicia, and Judea, to Laomedon.†

On the death of Jaddua, the high priest, who held that office twenty-one years, it devolved upon his son, Onias.‡

Ptolemy conceiving the great advantage it would be to his Egyptian territories, to secure the frontier provinces of Syria and Phœnicia, invaded the dominions of Laomedon, and soon made himself master of the whole, except Judea. The Jews, however, shewing upon this occasion a just regard for their oath of allegiance, refused to submit to him; whereupon, Ptolemy laid siege to Jerusalem, and took it by assault on the sabbath day, the inhabitants to their honour, even if upon a mistaken principle, refusing to break the commandment of Jehovah, even in their own defence; unlike modern Christian commanders, who but too often seem to select the sabbath by choice, for their offensive warfare. Having taken the city, Ptolemy carried more than one hundred thousand of the Jews captives into Egypt; but reflecting upon more consi-

formed some of that nation had joined the Macedonian army, but not that any of the Jews had, is it not probable they were Samaritans, and not Jews, who made this noble stand?

* Prid. i. 606. † Prid. i. 606—613.

‡ Prid. i. 612.

deration that men who had been so conscientious to their God, and their former allegiance, gave the best promise for their fidelity to himself, he selected thirty thousand of them to garrison his most important fortresses, and allowed the remainder of the captives to reside in the same vicinities, giving orders they should be supplied with all necessaries; and others of them he planted in Cyrene and Libya.*

When the army of Ptolemy was defeated by Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, many of the Jews followed the former potentate on his retreat into Egypt, rather than fall into the hands of Antigonus, and several thousands of families became settled at Alexandria.

Amongst others, was a distinguished character of the name of Hezekias, who was one of their chief priests. With him a Grecian historian, of the name of Hecatæus, was intimate, and from his information composed a history of the Jews, their religion, and polity, which is not now extant.†

On the death of Onias,‡ he was succeeded in the priest-

* "From these captives were descended the Cyrenian Jews, of whom was Jason, who wrote the history of the Maccabees in five books, (of which the second book of the Maccabees which we now have is an abridgment); and of whom also was Simon, that bore the cross of our Saviour at his crucifixion, and others who are mentioned in the New Testament." 2 Macc. i. Matt. xxvii. 32. Mark, xv. 21. Luke, xxiii. 26. Acts, ii. 10. and vi. 9. Prid. i. 613, 614.

† Prid. 631, 632. Josephus relates a curious story of Mosollam, a Jew, who, by shooting a bird with an arrow at a great distance, which the soothsayers in Alexander's army considered as a bad omen, shewed the folly and absurdity of the whole system of superstition observed by the heathen. Contra Apion, iv. 305. Prid. i. 633.

‡ This high priest received a letter from Areus, a king of Lacedemon, in which the Lacedemonians claimed kindred with the Jews, and desired friendship with them on that account. Prid. ii. 182.

hood, by his son Simon, who, from the holiness of his life, and the great righteousness which shone forth in all his actions, was called Simon the Just.*

Seleucus, one of the successors of Alexander, having built several new cities in Asia,† planted Jews in them all, granting them equal privileges and immunities with the Greeks and Macedonians, especially at Antioch, in Syria, where they settled in great numbers.‡

On the death of Simon the Just,§ he was succeeded by his brother, Eleazar, in the sacred office of the priesthood,‖ and by Antigonus of Socho, as president of the Sanhedrim, or national council of the Jews.¶

It was probably during this pontificate, and the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus,** that the famous Greek version of the

* Prid. i. 651. He was an eminent scribe in the law of God, and a great teacher of righteousness among the people; and being the first of the Tanaim or Mishnaical Doctors, from his school all those had their original who were afterwards called by that name; viz. from the death of Simon the Just to R. Judah Hakkadosh, who composed the Mishna about the middle of the second century. Prid. ii. 1. 92.

† Seleucia, on the Tigris, about forty miles from Babylon; sixteen cities of the name of Antioch, nine others of the name of Seleucia, six of Laodicea, three of Apamia, and Stratonicea. Prid. i. 659. 665. where see many curious matters as to Old Babylon.

‡ They became almost as considerable a part of this city as they were at Alexandria; and from thence it was that the Jews were dispersed all over Syria and the Lesser Asia. Prid. i. 665.

§ See many miraculous effects ascribed to Simon the Just, taken from the Jerusalem Talmud, in Prid. ii. 2. &c.

‖ Simon had left a son of the name of Onias, but he could not take the office of the priesthood on account of his infancy. Prid. i. 665.

¶ Prid. ii. 1.

** He founded at Alexandria, a museum or college of learned men, for the improvement of philosophy and all other knowledge, like that of the Royal Society at London, and the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris: in which he collected, it is said not by very reputable means, and left behind him, at the time of his death, more than one hundred thousand volumes. Prid. ii. 33.

Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was commenced, but when finished, or by whom, and under what circumstances began, appears to be involved in uncertainty.*

On the death of Eleazar, his nephew Onias being yet under the Levitical age, he was succeeded in the priesthood by Manasseh, the son of Jaddua, and uncle of Simon the Just.†

Antigonus of Socho was succeeded in the office of Nasi, or president of the Sanhedrim, by Joseph, the son of Joazer, under whom another Joseph, the son of John, was appointed Ab-Beth-Din, or vice president, both of whom taught jointly in the chief divinity school at Jerusalem.‡

During the presidency of Antigonus, the sect of the Sadducees sprung up, occasioned, as is supposed, from a perversion by two of his disciples, of his mode of inculcating the exalted principle of obedience to God, from a principle of filial love and fear.§

On the death of Manasseh, he was succeeded in the priesthood by Onias, the son of Simon the Just, who had now attained the Levitical age, but proved himself unworthy of that sacred and important office.‖

Ptolemy Euergetes, (or the Benefactor) on his return into Egypt from a successful invasion of the provinces belonging to Antiochus Theus, (or the Divine) took Jerusalem in his way, and offered up sacrifices to the God of Israel for the

* Prid. ii. 47—71. It was called the Septuagint from the supposition that seventy Jews were employed in the translation. The best edition is by Grabbe, 2 vols. folio.

† Prid. ii. 100. ‡ Prid. ii. 92.

§ Prid. ii. 92. This sect originated with Sadoc and Baithus, two of his disciples, who, separating from the school of their master, taught that there was no resurrection, nor a future state, but that all the rewards which God gave to those who served him, were in this life only. Prid. ii. 93.

‖ Prid. ii. 100.

victories which he had obtained over the king of Syria, apparently feeling that to him alone, and not to his own Egyptian idols, he was indebted for his success.*

During the pontificate of Onias, he had, through parsimony or negligence, omitted to pay the usual tribute to Ptolemy Euergetes, who thereupon threatened to levy the same by force of arms; but the threatened danger was averted by the adroitness of Joseph, nephew to the high priest, and who, proceeding on an embassy to Ptolemy, not only pacified his wrath, but procured himself to be appointed deputy or receiver general for the whole province.†

During the war between Antiochus the Great and Ptolemy Philopater, the former marched into Galilee, and took Philoteria, on the north end of the sea of Tiberias, and Scythopolis, or Bethsan, at the south end, and afterwards Attabyrium, seated on mount Tabor. Crossing the river Jordan, he took possession of Gilead and all the territories on that side of the river, which had been the inheritance of the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh. He then took Rabbah of Ammon,‡ or Philadelphia, but not till after a vigorous resistance.§

It was during these continued wars between the kings of Egypt and Syria, and under the indolent pontificate of Onias,

* Prid. i. 108.

† Prid. ii. 115—120. Such is the statement given from Josephus, Antiq. xii. 6.; but the whole has much the air of a romance, and no part of it more than that Joseph borrowed £700. of the bankers of Samaria, to enable him to undertake the embassy. There were, surely, as likely to be rich bankers at Jerusalem as at Samaria; besides which, the relation is mixed up with a great deal of other matter, even more improbable.

‡ Polybius calls it Rabbatamina, or Rabboth-Ammon; when Ptolemy Philadelphus rebuilt this city, he called it Philadelphia. Prid. ii. 133.

§ Prid. ii. 133.

that the Samaritans took advantage of his imbecile government; and probably under cloak of the authority with which the lieutenants of Antiochus were invested over Samaria,* shewed their ancient enmity to the Jews, by plundering and ravaging their country, and carrying many of the inhabitants into captivity, and selling them for slaves.†

On the death of Onias, he was succeeded by his son, Simon, a person of a very different character from that of his father.‡

The following year, however, Ptolemy recovered the possession of these countries; and coming to Jerusalem, and admiring the beauty of the temple, offered up sacrifices to the God of Israel, made many oblations to the temple, and gave several valuable donatives to it. Not satisfied with this, he attempted to pass into the sanctuary itself, and into the holy of holies, where none but the high priest could enter, and that once a year.§ Simon, the high priest, informed him of the sacredness of the place, and the priests and Levites, and populace having assembled, and with great lamentations and loud cries opposed his purpose; but the monarch's inclination being excited, rather than allayed, by this opposition, he pressed into the inner court, notwithstanding all opposition; and as he was proceeding into the temple itself, he was smitten from God with such a terror and confusion of mind, that he was carried out of the place half dead. Filled with wrath and mortification, instead of being humbled under such a divine visitation, the Egyptian quitted Jerusalem, vowing vengeance against the whole nation for the insult he had received.‖

* Prid. ii. 133. † Prid. ii. 136.
‡ Prid. ii. 163. § Lev. xiv. 2. 34.
‖ Prid. ii. 135, 136. Who quotes 3 Macc. i., respecting which book see also Prid. ii. 141, 142.

Nor was the tyrant long before he put his threats into execution; for on his return to Alexandria, he published a decree, prohibiting all persons from entering his palace who did not sacrifice to the gods of Egypt; and that this might effectually reach the Jews, he, by a second decree, degraded them from the privileges of Macedonians, the original founders of that city, and with which they had been invested by Alexander the Great and Ptolemy Soter. In order to ensure their degradation, he ordered them all to be marked with an ivy leaf, the badge of his god, Bacchus, and that those who refused should be made slaves or put to death. Those, however, who would embrace paganism were to be restored to their privileges; but to the honour of the nation, out of many thousands, only three hundred could be found who would consent to apostatize from the God of Israel. The nonconforming Jews having very properly refused all intercourse with their apostate brethren, Ptolemy resolved to massacre the remnant of this unhappy nation throughout his dominions; in order to which, he ordered all the Jews in Egypt to be brought in chains to Alexandria, when he shut them up in the Hippodrone,* with the intention of their being exposed to wild beasts, as a public show. On two successive days, the Egyptian courtiers and fashionables, like the modern Spaniards and Portuguese, were assembled to enjoy the sport, but were disappointed on account of their beastly monarch being saturated with liquor and fast asleep. During all this time, the poor Jews spent their time, like Daniel,† in lifting up their hands and voices, and praying to God for their deliverance; nor did they pray in vain: for he who delivered his prophet from the jaws of the devouring lions, was equally

* A large place without the city, where the people used to assemble to see the horse races and other shows. Prid. ii. 140.

† Dan. vi. 11. x. 2.

able to preserve his faithful servants from the trunks and fury of the Egyptian elephants, to whom, on the third day, they were actually exposed. For these animals, in order to incense their fury, having had wine and frankincense given to them in immense quantities, they lost all guidance, and turned their rage upon the spectators, and destroyed great numbers of them. There were also some supernatural appearances in the air, which so alarmed the vicious monarch and his courtiers, that he ordered all the Jews to be released, and rescinded his decrees against them; and, to make them some amends, granted them many favours and privileges, and, amongst others, liberty to put to death their apostate brethren, which they accordingly did without a single exception.*

* Prid. ii. 138. 141. who takes this relation from Macc. and Jos. At first sight this procedure may appear harsh and severe, and it has not unfrequently been so arraigned by the advocates of a cold and infidel philosophy, of a morbid and insalutary philanthropy. But such persons either forget that the law of Jehovah was positive upon that subject, or else they must consider the commandments of Jehovah entitled to but little respect. Deut. xiii. 6—18. xvii. 2—7.

The three hundred apostates, therefore, had rendered themselves, in every way, liable to the punishment of death. They had violated the command of their Divine Legislator, and their brethren were bound to put them to death, or subject themselves, their wives, and children, to the wrath of God if they did not: and they had committed the greatest possible political offence against their fellow countrymen; for Jehovah had repeatedly shewn to them, that when his law was broken, he visited the crime upon the nation at large, until the innocent had purged themselves from the offence, by putting to death the offenders. The distinctive peculiarity of the Jews was, that they were the immediate subjects of Jehovah himself; and, therefore, every act of idolatry was an act of rebellion and high treason, against their sovereign Lord and God. And whatever may be thought now, there can be no question that, until the advent of the Messiah, the whole Jewish law and polity was indispensably obligatory upon every descendant of Abraham.

Such, however, were the tyranny and cruelties of Philopater, that at length his own subjects rebelled against him; and it is assumed that the Jews took side with the insurgents, for in the result no less than forty thousand of them were slain.*

The Roman empire, or the fourth or iron kingdom prefigured by the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream,† approximated towards Jewish politics, during the minority of Ptolemy Epiphanes, who was an infant when his father, Ptolemy Philopater, died.‡ Philip,§ king of Macedon, having formed an alliance with Antiochus the Great, for the purpose of despoiling the youthful monarch of his dominions, the friends of that prince, attracted by the martial fame which the Romans had already acquired,‖ applied to the senate to take their ward under their care, and become his guardians.¶ Having complied with this request, the republic sent M. Æmilius Lepidus and others, as ambassadors to the confederated monarchs, threatening them with war if they attempted to injure their protégé.**

Not regarding this menace, Antiochus persisted in his purpose, but was anticipated by the Egyptian general, who possessed himself of Syria, and planted a garrison in the castle at Jerusalem.††

Antiochus, however, having at length collected his troops, soon repossessed himself of the greatest part of Palestine, and coming to Jerusalem, was readily received by the Jews, the

* Prid. ii. 144. quoting Euseb. † Dan. ii. 40.

‡ Prid. ii. 148.

§ Philip V. son of Demetrius II. He was defeated by the Romans, who reduced Macedon to a Roman province. Prid. ii. 157. Guthrie, iii. 353. Lempriere.

‖ Scipio Africanus had just beaten Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, at Zama, in Africa. B. C. 201. A. U. C. 552.

¶ Prid. ii. 151. ** Prid. ii. 152. †† Prid. ii. 153.

priests and elders going out to meet him in a solemn procession, and assisted him to reduce and expel the Egyptian garrison. In return for this (at that crisis, important) service, Antiochus granted the Jews many considerable immunities, and confirmed to them the privilege that no stranger should enter within the Sept or Chel of the temple.*

The Roman army, under the command of Titus Quintus Flaminius, having obtained a decisive victory over Philip at Cynocephalus, in Thessaly,† the war respecting the Egyptian monarch and his territories remained to be decided between the republic and Antiochus.‡

On the death of Simon, the high priest, he was succeeded by his eldest son, Onias the Third.§

Antiochus, although encouraged by the presence and assisted by the counsels of Hannibal, the celebrated Carthaginian general,‖ who had been forced to fly from his own country, having been defeated by the Romans in five successive battles,¶ at last sued for peace, upon the terms of paying them

* Prid. ii. 154. Upon one occasion, this monarch selected a chosen band of two thousand Jews from Babylonia, to suppress a dangerous rebellion in Phrygia and Lydia. Prid. ii. 155.

† Prid. ii. 157. ‡ Prid. ii. 157.

§ Prid. ii. 162.

‖ The inveterate hatred, and formidable plans of this wily African, were defeated by the superior address of Publius Villius, the Roman ambassador; who, by affecting great intimacy with Hannibal, and constantly visiting him, roused the suspicions of Antiochus, lest in advising him to carry the war into the plains of Italy, as had been the favourite scheme of the Carthaginian in the Punic wars, he was only practising some fraud in concert with the Romans. Prid. ii. 164.

¶ 1. by Acilius Glabrio, at Thermopylæ. 2. by C. Livius, near mount Corycus, in Ionia, in a naval fight. 3. by Æmilius, on the coasts of Pamphylia, in another naval fight. 4. by Æmilius again, in a third naval fight, near Myonnesus, in Ionia. And, 5. finally by Lucius Scipio, in a great battle, near Magnesia, under Sipilis. Prid. ii. 161—170.

fifteen thousand talents,* and granting to them and surrendering up all Asia on that side of mount Taurus.†

Antiochus had contrived to detach the Egyptians from their alliance with the Roman republic, and to marry his daughter, Cleopatra, to the infant monarch, Ptolemy Epiphanes;‡ and soon after the death of Antiochus, who was assassinated in the temple of Jupiter Belus, in the province of Ptolemais,§ Cleopatra was delivered of a son, afterwards Ptolemy Philometer.‖

Amongst the other principal inhabitants of the provinces, who visited the Egyptian court upon that occasion, was Hyrcanus, who was sent by his father, Joseph, to represent him and his office.¶

Hyrcanus took advantage of the confidence thus placed in him, to supersede his father in the receivership of the province, but of which he was deprived after the death of his father, Joseph.**

During the reign of Seleucus Philopater, who succeeded his father Antiochus on the throne of Syria, a schism happened between Simon, a Benjamite, who was governor and protector of the temple at Jerusalem, and Onias, the high priest.†† Seleucus had been a friend to the Jews, and had magnified the temple, by bearing all the costs belonging to the service of the sacrifices at his own expense;‡‡ but upon account of the above dispute, Simon disclosed to Apollonius, the governor of the province, the great riches that were laid up in the temple. Upon the governor making this report to his sovereign, he dispatched his treasurer, Heliodorus, to take possession of the treasure, but was prevented by a miraculous manifestation of divine power.§§

* Prid. ii. 173.; where see a learned note. † Prid. ii. 171.
‡ Prid. ii. 163. § Prid. ii. 174. ‖ Prid. ii. 177. ¶ See p. 359.
** Prid. ii. 180. †† Prid. ii. 184. ‡‡ 2 Macc. iii. 3.
§§ 2 Macc. ii. 3. Prid. ii. 184.

Simon continuing his revolt against the authority of the high priest, and deluging the city with murders, Onias went himself to Seleucus at Antioch, in order to obtain redress; but he had not been there long before that monarch was assassinated by his treasurer, Heliodorus.*

This usurpation being suppressed, Antiochus Epiphanes, or Epimanes, succeeded to the throne of his deceased brother.†

Soon after his accession, Jesus, or Jason, a brother of Onias, prevailed upon the new monarch to sell him the office of high priest for three hundred and sixty talents, and to keep Onias in confinement at Antioch; and having succeeded in that‡ object, he obtained permission, for one hundred and fifty talents more, to erect a gymnasium§ and ephebeum‖ at Jerusalem, thereby introducing many of the Greek and other pagan customs amongst the Jews.¶

* A place of exercise. † A place for training up of youth.

‡ Prid. ii. 185. § Prid. ii. 188—190. ‖ Prid. ii. 191.

¶ Prid. ii. 192. In 2 Macc. iv. 18, 19, the patron god of Tyre is called Hercules; but it is to be observed that he was not known to the Tyrians by that name, but that of Malcarthus, which being compounded of the two Phœnician words, Melec and Kartha, did, in that language, signify the king or lord of the city. The Greeks, from some similitude which they found in the worship of this god at Tyre, with that wherewith they worshipped Hercules in Greece, thought them to be both the same; and, therefore, called this Tyrian god Hercules; and hence came the name of Hercules Tyrius among them. This god seems to be the same with the Baal of the Holy Scriptures, whose worship Jezebel brought from Tyre into the land of Israel; for Baal, with the addition of Kartha, signifieth the same as Melec, with the same addition. For, as the latter, in the Phœnician language, is *king of the city*, the other, in the same language, is *lord of the city*. And as Baal is put alone to signify this Tyrian god in Scripture, so do we find Melec also put alone to signify the same god; for Hesychius tells us, Mulic is the name of Hercules among the Amathusians. And these Amathusians were a colony of the Tyrians in Cyprus. Prid. ii. 193, 194.

A war having broke out between Antiochus Epiphanes and Ptolemy Philometer, respecting Syria, the former came to Joppa to inspect the frontier towns, and thence proceeded to Jerusalem, where he was received by Jason with great ceremony and respect.*

The ensuing year, Jason sent his younger brother, Onias, or Menelaus, to Antioch, to pay his tribute money; when the latter supplanted him in the priesthood, by the same means as Jason had supplanted Onias, his elder brother, giving to Antiochus three hundred talents more than Jason had given; but having been defeated in his first attempt to obtain possession of that sacred office, he returned to Antioch, and pledging himself to forsake the religion of Jehovah, the monarch sent with him to Jerusalem an armed force, which enabled him to expel Jason from Jerusalem, and to take

A pious German, whilst bewailing the sufferings of his countrymen during the revolutionary war of France, makes the following just reflections upon this conduct of the Israelites. "The Israelites, and even the priests, followed the heathen games, (2 Macc. iv. 14, 15, 16.) and God sent these heathens, whose games they imitated, to punish them; and then we read, 'It is not a light thing to do wickedly against the laws of God.' We, also, should attend to this; for how many games, dances, and vanities have we borrowed from a certain nation? wherefore God hath sent them to punish us, and though we have beaten them, he hath soon healed their wounds, because we no sooner take breath, than we spend our time, especially in winter, in games, operas, plays, and vanities, and in the spring we take the field again, after so bad a preparation. Hence God at this time imbitters our sinful diversions, and connives at us no longer, but puts a stop to sin by his punishments. If any one escape with impunity, and grow secure, to him may be applied the words of chap. vii. 35. 'Thou hast not yet escaped the judgment of Almighty God, who seeth all things.'" Bogatsky ii. August 21. The same remark will also apply to the conduct of Herod the Great, and others who held the supreme power in Judea.

* Prid. ii. 196.

refuge amongst the Ammonites, and immediately exerted himself to establish the pagan rites and ceremonies.*

Menelaus having neglected to pay the tribute money, was summoned to Antioch, and the king being absent with his army, Menelaus directed his deputy at Jerusalem, to raise the amount by sale of the sacred vessels. Onias, who was still at Antioch, having reproached Menelaus for his sacrilegious conduct, the latter procured his assassination; but when Antiochus returned, he was so incensed, that he ordered his own lieutenant governor, Andronicus, who had planned the assassination, to be publicly executed on the same spot where Onias had suffered.†

Whilst Menelaus was gone to Antioch, he had left a brother, of the name of Lysimachus, as his deputy; but when he attempted to remove the sacred vessels, the populace rose upon him, and after dispersing his guard of three thousand men, slew him beside the treasury within the temple.‡

Antiochus having defeated the forces of Ptolemy Philometer, near Pelusium, took up his winter quarters at Tyre, where three Jewish delegates came to him to complain of the conduct of Lysimachus, and the sacrilege of Menelaus; but the latter having bribed one of the king's officers, that monarch, as it is supposed, contrary to his previous intention, absolved Menelaus, and caused the poor delegates to be put to death: an act of such wanton cruelty, that the Tyrians caused them to be honourably buried.§

At this period, through all the city of Jerusalem, for the space almost of forty days, there were seen horsemen running in the air, in cloth of gold, and armed with lances, like a band of soldiers; and troops of horsemen in array, encountering and running one against another, with shaking of

* Prid. ii. 197.

† Prid. ii. 199. ‡ Prid. ii. 201. § Prid. ii. 202.

shields, and multitude of pikes, and drawing of swords, and casting of darts, and glittering of golden ornaments, and harness of all sorts.*

Antiochus having obtained a second victory over the army of the Egyptians, took Memphis and all the rest of the country, except Alexandria, and finally obtained possession of the person of Ptolemy Philometer himself.†

During this expedition, a rumour having been spread that Antiochus was dead, Jason got together one thousand men and marched towards Jerusalem, and drove Menelaus into the castle, putting to death all that were opposed to his interests.‡

When Antiochus received information of this transaction, he apprehended that it was a revolt of the whole Jewish nation from his authority; and being also informed that the people had made public rejoicings at the tidings of his death, he forthwith marched to Jerusalem, which he besieged and took by force, and slew forty thousand of the inhabitants in the space of three days, and made as many more captives, whom he sold for slaves to the neighbouring nations. He also forced himself into the temple, and entered into the holy place and holy of holies, Menelaus conducting him. Not content with this pollution, he sacrificed a great sow upon the altar of burnt offerings; and having commanded broth to be made from the carcass, he sprinkled all the temple with the liquor, for the express purpose of defiling it. He also took away the altar of incense, the shewbread table, the candlestick and seven branches, and several other golden vessels and utensils, the donations of former kings, to the value of one thousand eight hundred talents; and, having plundered the city, he returned to Antioch, carrying with him the spoils of Egypt as well as of Judea; and at his departure left Philip,

* 2 Macc. v. 2, 3.
† Prid. ii. 203. ‡ Prid. ii. 204

a Phrygian, and a man of cruel and barbarous character, governor of Judea, and reinstated Menelaus as high priest.*

Jason, not daring to encounter Antiochus, fled back again to the Ammonites; but upon some accusation brought against him before Aretas, king of the Arabians, he fled from them also; and wandering about like Cain, abandoned by God, and persecuted by men, went first into Egypt, and afterwards into Lacedemonia, where he perished in exile and misery.†

Ptolemy Philometer and his brother, Ptolemy Physcon,‡ having agreed to divide the sovereignty of Egypt between them, and to assist each other against Antiochus, that monarch engaged in a third expedition to Egypt, with the avowed intention of crushing them both; but was stopped at Leusine by the ambassadors from Rome, to whose senate Physcon and his sister, Cleopatra, had appealed for assistance. The Syrian monarch manifesting symptoms of temporising, Popilius, although formerly his intimate friend, drew a circle round him with his staff, and insisted upon an answer before he moved out of it. Intimidated by this decisive and unusual proceeding, Antiochus submitted, and marched back his army.§

That vengeance, however, which he dared not shew to the Romans, he ignobly poured out upon the unoffending Jews; for marching through Palestine, he dispatched Apollonius with twenty-two thousand men, with orders to destroy the place.‖

* Prid. ii. 205. † Prid. ii. 206.

‡ He was first called Ptolemy Euergetes II.; but afterwards Physcon, or the fat guts or great bellied, by reason of the great and prominent belly which, by his luxury and gluttony, he afterwards acquired. Prid. ii. 207.

§ Prid. ii. 209—212.

‖ Prid. ii. 212.

Apollonius waited till the sabbath day before he discovered his purpose; but then, whilst the people were assembled in their synagogues and celebrating divine worship, he ordered his troops to begin the work of death; and which they executed, by slaying all the men, and taking captive all the women and children. He also pillaged the city, and set it on fire; and having pulled down the walls, he erected a strong tower on an eminence in the city of David, whence the garrison overlooked the whole city, and issued forth to destroy and enslave all who came to the temple to worship; thus reducing Jerusalem almost to a wilderness, and compelling the few remaining inhabitants to fly into the desert and neighbouring cities for refuge.*

THE MACCABEES.

Amongst the other fugitives thus cruelly driven ex aris et focis, was Judas Maccabæus, who, with his companions, retired into the wilderness, and there lived in great hardship, subsisting upon herbs and roots, and whatever the woods and mountains afforded.†

On his return to his capital, Antiochus, under pretence of establishing an *uniformity* of religion throughout his dominions, but, like other plans of the same sort, really with a view to suppress the worship of the true God and vital holiness, issued a decree commanding them to embrace the religion of the king, and worship his gods, forsaking all others; and sent overseers into the various provinces, in order to enforce obedience.‡

Athenæus, who was appointed by Antiochus to execute his

* Prid. ii. 213. † Prid. ii. 214. ‡ Prid. ii. 215.

decree in Judea, on coming to Jerusalem, caused the whole of the Jewish ceremonial to be abolished, and every trace of the worship of the true God to be effaced. Besides polluting their temple and profaning their sabbaths, he restrained them from circumcising their children, and whoever disobeyed these iniquitous orders was immediately put to death.* The Syrian soldiers, like the booted apostles of Lewis XIV. boasted of by that monarch's confessor, Father la Chaise,† proved the best missionaries; and the Jewish worship being thus effectually extirpated from the temple, Athenæus established there the performance of pagan rites, and consecrated it to Jupiter Olympus, erecting his image on one part of the altar of holocaust, and upon another part of it a smaller altar whereon to sacrifice.‡

In order to extend and perpetuate the heathen worship throughout the land, the Syrians set up altars, groves, and chapels of idols in every city; and officers were sent to compel them to eat swine and other unclean beasts, and to offer sacrifices to the pagan deities on all the public festivals. And amongst innumerable other abominations, the Jews were compelled to march in procession and carry ivy, in honour of Bacchus, the god of drunkenness.§ And it is but too true that great was the actual falling away of Israel, and that

* Two women being found at Jerusalem to have circumcised their male children, of which they had been lately delivered, they hanged those children about their necks, and having led them in this manner through the city, cast them headlong over the steepest part of the walls, and also slew all those who had been accessory with them in the performance of this forbiden rite. Prid. ii. 218.

† See the History of the Family of Migault, at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.—Letter from Pere la Chaise, confessor to Louis XIV, concerning the persecution of the French protestants.

‡ Prid ii. 217. § Prid. ii. 218.

many of the Jews not only very readily apostatized, but were even more severe and cruel towards their conscientious brethren, than the very heathens themselves.*

One of the places where the Syrians attempted to enforce the practice of these abominations was Modin,† where Mattathias‡ dwelt, a priest of the course of Jehoiarib,§ a faithful servant of Jehovah, who had five sons—Johanan, called Kaddis; Simon, called Thassi; Judas, called Maccabæus; Eleazar, called Avaras; and Johanan, whose surname was Apphus. When Apelles, the officer of Antiochus, came to Modin, he first addressed Mattathias, urging him to set an example of compliance with the monarch's wishes, and in that case promising to promote him and his sons to great riches. Mattathias, however, not only proclaimed aloud his determination to adhere to the law of his God, but observing one of the Jews about to offer sacrifice on an heathen altar, he slew him on the spot, before the face of Apelles; and then he and his sons slew Apelles and all his attendants, and afterwards returned to the mountains with his family, whither many of the conscientious Jews followed him.‖

* Prid. ii. 217.

† Authors differ whether this place was on the top of a high hill between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, or on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, within a mile of Joppa; but wherever situate, it seems to have been the burial place of the Maccabees. Wells, ii. 165, 166.

‡ He was the son of John, the son of Simon, the son of Asmoneus, from whom the family had the name of Asmoneans. Prid. ii. 219.

§ 1 Chron. xxiv. 7.

‖ Prid. ii. 219. "One company of them, to the number of a thousand persons, being gotten into a cave in the desert that lay nearest to Jerusalem, Philip, the Phrygian, whom Antiochus had left governor of Judea and Jerusalem, went out against them with his forces. At first he endeavoured to persuade them to a submission to the king's commands, promising them, on this condition, a thorough impunity for what was passed; but they all resolutely

concealed himself amongst the fastnesses of the m
but as soon as he had returned to Antioch, great nu
Jews began to resort to Mattathias, including among
the Chasidims or Asidæans.†

Reinforced by these accessions, Mattathias emer
his retreat, and proceeded to visit all the cities o
pulled down the heathen altars, circumcised t
children, and destroyed all the apostates and persecu
fell into his hands; and having recovered several
the law, he restored the service of the synagogue.‡

Mattathias, who was a very old man, had scarce

answering that they would rather die than forsake
of their God, he thereon laid siege to the cave which
possessed themselves of, omitting all other hostilitie
next sabbath, expecting then to master them without resist
so it accordingly happened. For they then refusing, out
scrupulous zeal for the observance of that day, to do any
their own defence; when fallen on by the enemy, were all cu
women, and children, without one being spared of the w
pany. From this time, however, Mattathias abandoned thi
and held that the law of the sabbath in such a case did not b
ii. 220. What would these conscientious Jews have thou
modern warriors, who seem to prefer a sabbath day for t

the work of purification, when he found the time of his departure was at hand; and, therefore, calling his five sons together, thus addressed them; "Now hath pride and rebuke gotten strength, and the time of destruction, and the wrath of indignation: now therefore, my sons, be ye zealous for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers. Call to remembrance what acts our fathers did in their time: so shall ye receive great honour and an everlasting name. Was not Abraham found faithful in temptation, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness? Joseph, in the time of his distress, kept the commandment, and was made lord of Egypt. Phineas, our father, in being zealous and fervent, obtained the covenant of an everlasting priesthood. Joshua, for fulfilling the word, was made a judge in Israel. Caleb, for bearing witness before the congregation, received the heritage of the land. David, for being merciful, possessed the throne of an everlasting kingdom. Elias, for being zealous and fervent for the law, was taken up into heaven. Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, by believing, were saved out of the flame. Daniel, for his innocency, was delivered from the mouths of lions. And thus consider ye throughout all ages, that none that put their trust in him shall be overcome. Fear not, then, the words of a sinful man; for his glory shall be dung and worms. To-day he shall be lifted up, and to-morrow he shall not be found; because he is returned into his dust, and his thought is come to nothing. Wherefore, ye my sons, be valiant, and shew yourselves men in the behalf of the law; for by it shall ye obtain glory. And, behold, I know that your brother Simon is a man of counsel; give ear unto him alway: he shall be a father unto you. As for Judas Maccabæus, he hath been mighty and strong, even from his youth up; let him be your captain, and fight the battle of the people. Take also unto you all those that observe the law, and avenge ye the wrong of your people. Recompense fully

the heathen, and take heed to the commandments of the law." So he blessed them, and was gathered to his fathers.*

Accordingly, upon the decease of his father, Judas assumed the government and direction of his family and countrymen, and erected a standard, with the motto "Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Jehovah;"† whence Judas and his brethren were thenceforth denominated MACCABEES.‡

Judas lost no time in endeavouring to complete the great work which his father had begun; and having extirpated the idolaters, with their vessels and utensils, he fortified the towns, rebuilt the fortresses, and placed strong garrisons in the cities of Judah, for their protection and defence; and soon became so powerful, that he vanquished and slew Apollonius and Seron, two commanders of Antiochus, in two successive battles.§

When that monarch first heard of these proceedings of Judas, and the defeat of his generals, he was celebrating certain games at Daphne, near Antioch, in imitation of the Roman triumphs; and in which he gave himself up to every possible excess of luxury, and the most disgusting debauchery.‖

In the fierceness of his rage, he dispatched first Nicanor, and afterwards Lysias, with large armies, and positive instructions to extinguish the whole Jewish nation. Judas, however, was enabled to defeat all their machinations; for he not only defeated Nicanor at Emmaus, and Lysias at Bethsura, but also Timotheus and Bacchides, two other lieu-

* 1 Macc. ii. 49—69. † Exod. xv. 11.

‡ The Hebrew words in English are thus; Mi Camo-ka Baelim Jehovah, whence MCBJ; and where see also many other instances of Jewish names formed from initial letters, as Rambam for Maimonides, &c. Prid. ii. 224, 225.

§ Prid. ii. 229, 230. ‖ Prid. ii. 229, 230.

tenants of the Syrian monarch; and upon each occasion with an immense destruction of the heathen armies.*

This extraordinary hero, having thus driven all the hostile forces out of his country, proceeded to Jerusalem; and having appointed priests, set about clearing the sanctuary, removing the rubbish, and restoring the city and temple, and the worship of Jehovah, to their former condition; and renewed the ceremony of dedication, by a religious festival of eight days' continuance.†

The Syrian garrison, however, who still retained possession of the fortress which Apollonius had built on mount Acra, gave these pious Jews great annoyance; wherefore Judas shut them up within their walls, and raised and fortified the mountain of the house, so as to protect his people.‡

The Idumæans,§ too, having shewn themselves great enemies to the Jews, he fortified Bethsura as a barrier against the inroads from those people, who now had got possession of Hebron, formerly the capital of the tribe of Judah.‖

The surrounding nations were much excited with envy and hatred at the restoration of the Jews, and were upon the point of forming a conspiracy with Antiochus, for the ruin and destruction of their name and nation; when God saw fit to arrest that impious monarch whilst threatening them with wrath and destruction, and declaring he would bury the whole nation in one common grave, in their own city. Whilst thus breathing out slaughter and wickedness, God saw fit to

* Prid. ii. 230—236. † Prid. ii. 237—240.

‡ Prid. ii. 241. See plans of the city of Jerusalem in Wells' Geography, Jolliffe's Letters, and Buckingham's Travels in Palestine.

§ Not the Idumæans or Edomites of the Old Testament. Prid. i. 33. ii. 241.

‖ Prid. ii. 242. As to the actual position of this city, see 2 Macc. ii. 5.

arrest his progress; for he had hardly uttered the threat when he was seized with a horrible and incurable disorder; vermin issuing from his body, which he saw rotting from day to day before his eyes.*

Nor was the Majesty of Heaven satisfied with thus signally disarming and punishing this atrocious persecutor, but constrained him, in his last agonies, to acknowledge the strong hand of him whom he had dared to defy, whose altars he had ventured to pollute, and upon whose chosen ones he had presumed to trample. "Now I remember the evils that I did at Jerusalem, and that I took all the vessels of gold and silver that were therein, and sent to destroy the inhabitants of Judea without a cause. I perceive, therefore, that *for this cause* these troubles are come upon me; and, behold, I perish through great grief in a strange land."†

Thus, in more modern times, another infidel, whilst expiring in agonies, amidst the polluted, though beautiful, groves of Ferney, was at last compelled to exclaim; Ah! the Galilean, he is too strong for me!‡ Thus, too, does Jehovah compel the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder thereof does he restrain;§ and thus, when the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, does he that sitteth in the heavens laugh, and Jehovah himself has them in derision.‖

Ptolemy Macron, who had been another great persecutor

* Prid. ii. 242—244.

† 1 Macc. vi. 12, 13. The Jews in Jerusalem wrote a letter to their brethren in Egypt, congratulating them upon the death of the tyrant, which Whiston considers authentic. 2 Macc. i. Whiston, i. 209. See Dan. xi. &c. as to the kings of the north and the south, illustrated by Prid. ii. 248. and Keith, pp. 390. 448.

‡ Barruel, vol. i. 353. 357. 365. 369.

§ Ps. lxxvi. 10.

‖ Ps. ii. 2. 4.

of the Jews, although latterly he had shewn them some favour, met with a miserable death soon after the accession of the new sovereign of Syria, Antiochus Eupator, the son of the last monarch; for being taunted on account of his various acts of past treachery, and deprived of all his places, he poisoned himself in despair.*

The death, however, of Antiochus Epiphanes had not so broken up the confederacy, but that many of the neighbouring heathen committed great ravages amongst the Jews; and particularly the Edomites, under the command of Gorgias, the governor of Syria, had done them much mischief. Judas Maccabæus, therefore, directed his attention chiefly to this nation, and having fallen in with them at Acrabattene, he slew no less than twenty thousand of them. He also defeated the Beanites, another tribe of Idumea, and having taken two of their fortresses, put to death twenty thousand of that tribe.†

The Jewish hero then passing over Jordan, had many severe conflicts with the Ammonites, and having slain great numbers of them, took Jazar and the villages in the vicinity, and then returned to Judea.‡

Timotheus, another lieutenant of the king of Syria, having collected a large army and invaded Judea, with the determination of exterminating the Jews, was successfully encountered by Judas, who slew twenty-one thousand of his enemies; and having taken Gazara, a city in the tribe of Ephraim, slew Timotheus, his brother Chereas, and Apollophanes, another of the Syrian generals.§

Previous to this last battle, Judas and his army turned themselves to pray unto God, and sprinkled earth upon their heads, and girded their loins with sackcloth, and fell down at the foot of the altar, and besought him to be merciful to them,

* Prid. ii. 255. † Prid. ii. 256. ‡ Prid. ii. 256.
§ Prid. ii. 256.

and to be an enemy to their enemies, and an adversary to their adversaries, as the law declareth.*

Another confederacy was afterwards formed amongst the heathen who resided near to Gilead, and who invaded Tob, and slew one thousand of the Jews, and took their goods for a spoil, and carried their wives and children into captivity. Others of the Jews fleeing to the fortress of Dathema, in Gilead, were besieged by a successor of Timotheus; and at the same time the inhabitants of Tyre, Sidon, and Ptolemais, invaded Galilee. To meet and dissolve this combination, Judas marched himself with eight thousand men to Dathema, taking in his way Bossora, and coming unexpectedly upon the besiegers, routed them with great slaughter; and afterwards took the cities of Maspha, Casphon, Moled, Bosor, and all the other cities of Gilead, slaying all the males and setting the cities on fire, as he had done at Bossora.†

Simon Maccabæus having at the same time marched into Galilee, slew great numbers of the enemy, and drove them up to the gates of Ptolemais, and brought with him back to the land of Judah all his afflicted and persecuted brethren, with their families and property.‡

But Joseph and Azarias, two other brothers of this heroic family, whom Judas had left to guard Jerusalem, with strict injunctions not to engage in any enterprise during his absence, disobeyed those orders; and, by an injudicious zeal, undertook an expedition against Jamnia, a sea port on the Mediterranean, when they were defeated by Gorgias, with the loss of two thousand men.§

But their difficulties were not yet at an end; for Lysias, who was regent of Syria during the minority of Antiochus Eupator, collected an army of eighty thousand men, and

* 2 Macc. x. 25, 26. Exod. xxiii. 22. † Prid. ii. 258.
‡ Prid. ii. 258. § Prid. ii. 259.

eighty elephants, besides cavalry, and invading Judea, laid siege to Bethsura; but Judas fell upon this vast host with his veteran troops, and slew more than twelve thousand, and put all the rest to flight.*

By this victory, Judas purchased a short breathing time for himself and his brethren; for Lysias, through the mediation of the Roman ambassadors, Q. Memmius, and Titus Manlius, who then sojourned at the court of Eupator, entered into a treaty with him, which was confirmed by the sovereign, whereby his father's decree enjoining uniformity was rescinded, and liberty granted to the Jews to worship God, according to the dictates of their own consciences.†

But the enmity of the neighbouring nations was not yet subdued: and when indeed is the enmity of the world against the church of God subdued; for is not the carnal heart constantly in enmity, yea, enmity itself against God?‡ Thus on the departure of Lysias, the inhabitants of Joppa threw two hundred of the Jews who dwelled in that city into the sea; whereupon Judas entered their city by night, burned their shipping, and slew all the inhabitants; and inflicted a similar punishment upon the Jamnites, who were making preparation for committing other acts of cruelty.§

Timotheus, one of the sons of Gennæus, having oppressed the Jews of Gilead, Judas proceeded to their help; when he was encountered by a band of five thousand Arabians, whom he defeated and received into alliance. The inhabitants of Caspis having also opposed him, Judas took their city, slew the inhabitants, and taking away great spoils, utterly destroyed

* Prid. ii. 260. † Prid. ii. 260.

‡ Rom. viii. 7. James, iv. 4.

§ Prid. ii. 262. He came upon the Jamnites also by night, and set fire on the haven and the navy, so that the light of the fire was seen at Jerusalem, two hundred and forty furlongs. 2 Macc. xii. 9.

the place. Advancing to Caraca, in the land of Tob, he found Timotheus had departed thence; and therefore, leaving Dositheus and Sosipator, two of his captains, to subdue the intermediate garrisons, which they accomplished and slew ten thousand men, he marched himself in pursuit of Timotheus. The hostile armies encamped near each other at a place called Rapha, on the borders of the river Jabboc; when Judas defeated Timotheus with the loss of thirty thousand men, that general himself in his flight falling into the hands of Dositheus and Sosipator, as they were proceeding to join the main army. Having promised to release many Jews who were the relatives of the officers in the army, they suffered him to escape; but Judas proceeded to Carnion, a strong city of Gilead, where Timotheus had lodged his women and children for safety, and when he slew them all, with twenty-five thousand more of the troops which had fled thither after the battle, setting fire to the temple of Atargatis.* Then collecting all the Jews who were in Gilead and the vicinity, he carried them back with him into Judea, and planted them in the desolate places of Judah. The strong city of Ephron lying in his way, he wished to have passed through it in a peaceable manner, but being refused, and finding no other convenient passage, he was obliged to storm the place; and putting twenty-five thousand males to the sword, took their spoils, and razed the city, and marching

* This deity is by Strabo (lib. 16. p. 748.) said to be a Syrian goddess. Pliny (lib. 5. c. 23.) saith that she was the same with Derceto, and he tells us (c. 13.) that she was worshipped at Joppa, in Phœnicia. Diodorus Siculus (lib. 2.) saith that she was worshipped in Ascalon, and was there represented by an image having the form of a woman in the upper part, and that of a fish in the lower part. Hence this deity is conjectured to have been the same with Dagon of the Philistines. See Selden de Diis Syris, syntag. 2. c. 3. Prid. ii. 263.

over the bodies of the slain, recrossed the Jordan into the plains of Bethsan,* and thence returned to Jerusalem.

On returning into the city of their fathers, Judas and all his army went up to the temple, and offered up a public thanksgiving to God for their extraordinary success, not having lost a single man during their whole expedition; so mercifully had their God dealt with them, and so singularly had he manifested his providential care for their protection.†

After celebrating the feast of Pentecost, Judas marched against Gorgias and the Idumæans, who during his absence had committed inroads upon the Jewish territories, and whom he defeated, Gorgias escaping with difficulty to Marisa. In this battle, however, several Jews were slain; but when Judas and his army proceeded to collect the dead bodies for burial, they found that every one of them had secreted upon their persons, some of the things which were dedicated to the idols of the heathen, and which, though taken as spoils, were forbidden by the law‡ to be kept for use; and thus discovering how these unhappy Jews had sacrificed themselves to the love of unlawful gain, they praised God with fear and reverence; and making a collection amongst the army of two thousand drachms of silver, Judas sent it to Jerusalem to provide sin offerings, there to be offered up for the expiation of this offence, that wrath might not fall upon the whole congregation of Israel, as it had formerly done in the case of Achan.§

* Then called Scythopolis; the Jews whereof having related that the inhabitants had dealt lovingly with them, and entreated them kindly in the time of their adversity, they gave them thanks, desiring them to be friendly still unto them. 2 Macc. xii. 30, 31.

† Prid. ii. 262—264. ‡ Deut. vii. 25, 26.

§ A striking example of the severity of God's displeasure against this sin is exhibited in the history of the son of Zerah; (Josh. xii. 18.) and who is afterwards held up as an example to all unrighteous, covetous, and dishonest persons. Josh. xxii. 20.

Judas then proceeded to Hebron, the capital of Idumæa, and dismantled that city and the neighbouring towns; and having taken Azotus, or Ashdod,* he pulled down the altars of the heathen, burned their carved images, and returned to Judea, laden with the spoils of his enemies.†

This splendid tide of success, however, for some reason which the authors of the book of Maccabees do not explain, was destined to receive a serious check; for Judas finding that the Syrian garrison which had all along retained possession of the fortress of Acra, in the heart of Jerusalem, and which occasioned the Jews considerable loss and inconvenience, he set himself in earnest to reduce them both by assault and famine. Amongst the garrison were some apostate Jews, who justly apprehending that if they fell into the hands of the Maccabees, they would meet with no mercy, contrived to make their escape, and fled to the court of Antioch; where representing the dangerous state to which the Syrians in Acra were reduced, Antiochus Eupator assembled an immense army of one hundred thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, thirty-two elephants, and three hundred armed chariots, under the command of himself and Lysias, and passing into Idumea, laid siege to Bethsura. Judas assembled his forces, which were far inferior in number, to meet this mighty host; and in a grand attack slew four thousand of them, but upon encountering them the next day, was obliged to retreat into Jerusalem. In this battle Eleazar Maccabæus lost his life; for getting under an elephant, upon which he thought

1 Chron. ii. 7. And, no doubt, in many instances where the people of God fall into distress, if a strict scrutiny were to take place, some unlawful garment or wedge of gold would be found in the camp.

* See the prophecies as to Ashdod and Philistia in general, and its present state, illustrated and exhibited by Keith, pp. 236—244.

† Prid. ii. 265.

Antiochus was mounted, he thrust his spear into the animal's belly, and was killed by its immense weight, in falling down dead from the wound. Antiochus then resumed the siege of Bethsura, which falling short of provisions, and after a most vigorous defence, surrendered upon an honourable capitulation.*

Antiochus then marched to Jerusalem, and besieged the sanctuary; but when the besieged were almost reduced to the same necessities as their brethren in Bethsura, the besiegers were diverted from their purpose by information which Lysias received, that Philip, whom Antiochus Epiphanes had made guardian of his infant son, had taken advantage of the absence of the army from Antioch, seized upon the capital, and assumed the reins of government. Having therefore made a hasty, but for the Jews an honourable peace, he was admitted within the fortifications of the sanctuary; but when he saw how strong they were, contrary to his oath, he ordered them to be all pulled down and destroyed, before his departure for Syria.†

Menelaus had accompanied Antiochus in this expedition, in expectation of being restored to his office of high priest; but when Lysias considered all the difficulties and inconveniences of the war, and that this wicked person had been the chief cause of it, he accused him to the king, who, thereupon, condemned him to death, and caused him to be smothered in a tower of ashes, at Berhœa, a city of Syria.‡

Upon the death of Menelaus the sacred office was granted

* Prid. ii. 266. † Prid. ii. 267.

‡ Aleppo. This was a punishment then used for sacrilege, treason, and such other great crimes. Prid. ii. 267. A high tower being filled a great way up with ashes, the criminal was from the top thrown down headlong into them, and there had the ashes by a wheel continually stirred up and raised about him, till he was suffocated and died. Prid. i. 480. 2 Macc. xiii. 5.

to Alcimus, or Jacimus, a person nearly as wicked as his predecessor; whereupon, Onias, the son of him of that name, who at the instigation of Menelaus had been slain at Antioch, and who ought to have succeeded him, exasperated at the injustice which was done him, fled from Antioch, where he then resided, to the court of Egypt, and obtained the favour of Ptolemy Philometer, and of his queen Cleopatra.*

Demetrius Soter, who was heir† to the throne of Syria, having made his escape from Rome, was almost immediately acknowledged as sovereign at Antioch, and forthwith put to death both Antiochus Eupator and his tutor Lysias.‡

Alcimus, the new high priest, having in various ways polluted himself by conforming to the heathen idolatries, collected as many of the apostate Jews as he could assemble; and presented himself to Demetrius, with complaints against Judas and his brethren, alleging that they slew many of the king's friends, and banished others, including themselves, for no other reason than because they had obeyed the edicts of Antiochus Epiphanes. Urged by this representation, the Syrian

monarch sent Bacchides with a large army into Judea, accompanied by Alcimus, whom he confirmed in the office of the high priest. They at first proceeded by artifice, and, under an oath of peace and amity, drew several of the Asidæans into their snare, whom Alcimus immediately slew; but Judas and his companions cautiously kept aloof. Bacchides encamped for some time at Bezeph, and committed many atrocities; after which he withdrew into Syria, and left part of his forces with Alcimus, who excited great commotions, and did much mischief. Judas having, however, on the departure of the Syrian general, marched out with his troops and punished those cities and districts which had revolted, Alcimus was afraid to meet him in the field, and fled to Antioch; and presenting Demetrius with a crown of gold and other gifts, renewed his complaints against Judas, assuring him that as long as Judas Maccabæus lived, the king's authority would never become established in that country.

Demetrius influenced by these suggestions, and the advice of his courtiers, ordered Nicanor with another army to proceed to Judea, and destroy both Judas and his followers. That officer, however, being convinced by past experience that it was much easier to plan such matters at Antioch, than to execute them in Judea, commenced a negociation with the Jewish leader, and having met and conversed in a friendly way, soon settled the preliminaries of a treaty of peace; but Alcimus, the arch-heretic, no sooner discovered the peaceable dispositions of Nicanor, but he posted away again to Antioch, and so influenced the mind of Demetrius, that he refused to ratify the treaty into which Nicanor had entered, and dispatched positive instructions to that officer, to prosecute a bellum internecinum against Judas and his brethren.*

Forgetting the honourable principles by which he had been

* Prid. ii. 274.

so lately actuated, and abandoning those which ought to govern a noble-minded and generous soldier, the crafty Syrian attempted to inveigle Judas into his power, by inviting him to a renewal of the late conference; but Judas discovering that an ambush was laid for him, avoided the snare. The first action which took place between them was at Capharsalama; when Nicanor, having lost five thousand men, retreated to Jerusalem.* Nicanor then went to the mountain of the temple, and demanded that Judas and his host should be delivered up to him; threatening them, in case of refusal, that he would on his return pull down the altar, burn the temple, and erect thereon a temple to Bacchus in its stead; using many blasphemous expressions, alike against the temple and the God of the temple. The pious Jews betook themselves to their strong hold—prayer to Jehovah of Hosts—nor without avail; for Nicanor, having in a rage led his troops forthwith against Judas, was slain in

* Being much enraged by means of this defeat, Nicanor first vented his wrath on Razis, an eminent and honourable senator of the Jewish senate, called the Sanhedrim. For finding that he was much honoured and beloved by the Jews, not only by reason of his steady and constant perseverance in his religion through the worst of times, but also because of the good and kind offices which he was ready on all occasions to do his people, Nicanor thought it would be an act of great displeasure and despite to the Jews to have him cut off; and therefore sent out a party of five hundred men to take him, with intent to put him to death. But Razis being at a castle of his which he had in the country, there defended himself against them for some time with great valour; but at length finding he could hold out no longer, he fell upon his own sword. The wound not killing him, he cast himself headlong over the battlements of the turret whereon he fought; and finding himself alive after that also, he thrust his hand into his wound, and pulling out his bowels, cast them upon the assailants, and so died. The Jews for this reckoned him a martyr; but St. Austin, in his epistle to Dulcitius, condemns the fact as self-murder, and there gives reasons for it that cannot be answered. Prid. ii. 206.

the outset; and his army was so dispersed and destroyed by the inhabitants of the country, that the whole thirty-five thousand men, of which it consisted, were utterly destroyed.

Judas having found the body of Nicanor on the field of battle, cut off his head, and right hand which he had stretched out in defiance of the living God, and hung them both up in one of the towers of Jerusalem.*

Notwithstanding the signal deliverances which he had so often experienced, Judas, very soon after the death of Nicanor, sent ambassadors to Rome, who consented to enter into a treaty of alliance and mutual defence with the Jews; a step which probably† led to his subsequent defeat; and which in the result was unquestionably a secondary cause of the final destruction of their temple, and the dispersion of their nation.‡

In the mean time, however, and before the issue of this embassy was known, Demetrius had sent Bacchides again into Judea, to revenge the death of Nicanor and the destruction of that army; when all the troops of Judas, except one thousand eight hundred, deserted their commander; and he, having rashly engaged the numerous forces of the enemy with that handful of men, was himself slain. And all Judah and Jerusalem made great lamentation for him; and his brethren, Jonathan and Simon, buried him honourably in the sepulchre of his fathers at Modin.§

By the aid of the apostate Jews, and of the advocates of the

* Prid. ii. 297.

† The Israelites had often been instructed, that they could not offend their Heavenly Governor by any thing more, than by confiding in foreign alliances, instead of placing their trust simply in him. 2 Kings, xviii. 21, 22. Is. xxxvi. 6, 7. And so it is with every private Christian, who, in the time of difficulty, has recourse to any crooked policy or mere human device, instead of placing all his trust in God and Christ.

‡ Prid. ii. 297. § Prid. ii. 298.

doctine of expediency, of which there are always a sufficient number amongst the great and dignified in all countries, but who are no less traitors to their country than to their king and their God, Alcimus soon acquired the ascendancy; when the Maccabæan family, and their friends and partisans, were exposed to rigid persecution. Upon which all the true servants of God collected round Jonathan, one of the brothers of Judas, and appointed him captain over them, who, with his brother Simon, immediately raised what forces he could; but being pursued by Bacchides, they retreated into the wilderness of Tekoa, and encamped near Jordan, with a morass on one side, and the river on the other. Having sent their brother John to their friends, the Nabotheans, with their baggage and effects, that commander was intercepted, and plundered, and slain by the Jambrians, an Arabian tribe, who then inhabited Medola, a city which had formerly belonged to the Moabites.*

In revenge for this, Jonathan and Simon laid an ambush for seizing one of the Jambrian nobles with his bride, whilst meeting in the mountains of Canaan, and succeeded in cutting off both them and their attendants, and then returned to their camp.†

Bacchides, hearing of this occurrence, proceeded to attack their camp on the sabbath day; but Jonathan putting the Jews in mind of the edict of his father, Mattathias,‡ exhorted them to resist the enemy, which they did with such effect as to slay one thousand men; and then, throwing themselves into the river Jordan, swam over to the other side, and finally escaped.§

Bacchides, returning to Jerusalem, fortified the cities and strong holds throughout Judea, and especially mount Acra, supplying it abundantly with men and provisions; and seizing

* Prid. ii. 299. † Prid. ii. 299. ‡ See p. 374.
§ Prid. ii. 300.

upon the children of the chief men of the country, he confined them in that fortress as hostages.*

Alcimus being thus established in full power, set himself, like our modern emancipators, to pollute and corrupt the Jewish rites, and make them more conformable to those of the surrounding heathen. Haggai and Zechariah had ordered a low wall, called the Chel or wall of partition, to be erected round the sanctuary, to separate the holy from the unholy part of the mountain, within which no uncircumcised person was allowed to enter. But Alcimus, in order to take away this distinction, and give the Gentiles equal liberty with the Jews to pass into the inner court of the temple, ordered this wall of partition to be pulled down; but whilst the operation was performing, God struck down the arch-apostate, and he died in his sin.†

On the death of Alcimus, for whose sake chiefly this last war had been undertaken, and most probably influenced by the letters which the Roman senate had sent to Demetrius, in consequence of the embassy‡ of Judas Maccabæus, Bacchides returned into Syria, leaving the unhappy land of Judea in a state of comparative tranquillity.§

Jonathan having availed himself of the interval of peace, to restore as far as possible the shattered institutions of his country, was still assailed by the apostate faction, who laid a plan with the court of Syria for the assassination of himself and all his friends, and Bacchides was sent with an army, to countenance and support the atrocity: but the Jewish leader happily discovered and defeated the plot, and slew thirty of the conspirators.‖

Feeling himself greatly inferior to the Syrian general in military force, he retired to Bethhasi, a strong fortress in the

* Prid. ii. 300. † Prid. ii. 300.
‡ Prid. ii. 297. § Prid. ii. 301. ‖ Prid. ii. 304.

wilderness, the fortifications of which he strengthened and repaired, and there awaited his enemies. Bacchides was assisted in the siege by considerable numbers of the apostate Jews, and on the approach of the hostile army, Jonathan drew out part of his troops in order to harass and cut off the besiegers, leaving his brother Simon with the rest, to defend the fortress; and this plan was so successfully pursued, that Bacchides not only grew weary of the war, but became incensed against those Jews who had drawn his court into their measures, and put several of them to death. Jonathan having received information that the Syrian general was about to quit the country, opened a negociation with him, which ended in a mutual exchange of prisoners, and a treaty of peace; after which Jonathan settled in peace at Michmash, a town lying about nine miles north of Jerusalem, where he governed Israel according to the law of Moses, cutting off all the apostates, and, as far as he had the means, producing a reformation both in church and state.*

The affairs of Judea proceeded thus tranquilly till Demetrius having given himself up to debauchery and drunkenness, an impostor, named Balas, assuming the name of Alexander, was set up as a son of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the Roman senate allowing itself to be influenced in his favour, the conspiracy soon became formidable.

Jonathan and his Jews were now become strong enough to be an object worthy the alliance of either of the contending parties, and both Demetrius and Alexander, who had taken possession of Ptolemais, sent ambassadors, with presents and unlimited overtures, to secure their assistance. Jonathan, however, recollecting the cruelties of Demetrius, and fearful of trusting to his promises, preferred identifying himself with the fortunes of Alexander, and in which he was most

* Prid. ii. 305.

likely governed by the policy of the Romans. Alexander having appointed him to the office of high priest, which had been vacant since the death of Alcimus, he assumed that sacred office, to which, indeed, he was entitled as well by birth as by character and qualification.*

The contest between Alexander, assisted by Jonathan and the Romans, and Demetrius, after one or two indecisive actions, ended in a pitched battle, wherein Demetrius being defeated and slain, his competitor acquired the throne of Syria.†

Soon after this victory, he obtained Cleopatra, the daughter of Ptolemy Philometer, for his wife, and the wedding being celebrated at Ptolemais, Jonathan was invited, and received with great honour by both the monarchs; Alexander, according to his promise, appointing him general of Judea, one of the chief princes of his empire, and Meridarches‡ of his palace; and many of his enemies attempting to misrepresent his conduct, Alexander refused to hear them, and sent Jonathan home to Judea laden with honours.§

Onias, who, we have seen,‖ had retired to the court of Memphis, prevailed on Ptolemy Philometer to allow him to build a temple in imitation of that at Jerusalem, in the Nomos,

* Prid. ii. 312. † Prid. ii. 314.

‡ "That is, chief sewer, an office which one of the electors still bears in the German empire. Grotius thus explains the word in his comment on the Maccabees, 1 Macc. x. 65. xi. 27. and 3 Macc. p. 796. But in his comment on Matt. xix. 28. he expounds it rather to denote the governor of a tribe or province; and, if it be so taken here, and be understood to mean that Jonathan was rather made governor of some part of the Syrian empire, than governor and orderer of the parts and dishes of the feast at the royal table, perchance this interpretation may reach the truth nearer than the other." Prid. ii. 314.

§ Prid. ii. 315. ‖ See p. 386.

or prefecture of Heliopolis,* upon the site of an old temple of Bubastis,† wherein he placed an altar of incense, a shew-bread table, and other utensils, like those at Jerusalem, and having persuaded the Jews that he was at liberty to do so from the prophecy of Isaiah,‡ he prevailed on the priests and Levites to administer the Jewish ritual therein; and afterwards built a city in the vicinity; which after his own name he called Onion.§

Alexander, the usurper and impostor, having given himself up to debauchery and luxury, Demetrius Nicator, the son of Demetrius Soter, who had been secretly preserved and educated at Cnidus, made an effort to recover his father's throne; and landing in Cilicia, was joined by Apollonius, who then governed in Cœle-Syria and Phœnicia for Alexander. The first step which this officer took to shew his devotion to the youthful adventurer, was to attempt to reduce Jonathan and his poor Jews, who remained firm in their allegiance to Alexander.

Having collected a large army, he encamped in Jamnia, whence he sent an insolent defiance to Jonathan; Thou alone liftest up thyself against us, and I am laughed to scorn for thy sake, and reproached: and why dost thou vaunt thy power against us in the mountains? Now, therefore, if thou trustest in thine own strength, come down to us into the plain field, and there let us try the matter together; for with me

* Or the city of the sun. Prid. ii. 316.; where see many curious particulars relating to the erection of this temple, and its name. See Jos. ii. 271.

† Or Isis. ‡ Is. xix. 18, 19.

§ Prid. ii. 315—318. "On, therefore, was Heliopolis, the chief city of the canton of that name, called by Ptolemy, Onium, distant about twenty miles from Memphis, the metropolis. Un. Hist. i. 453. *note* U.

is the power of the cities. Ask and learn who I am, and the rest that take our part; and they shall tell thee that thy foot is not able to stand before our face: for thy fathers have been twice put to flight in their own land. Wherefore, now, thou shalt not be able to abide the horsemen and so great a power in the plain, where is neither stone nor flint, nor place to flee unto.* Jonathan immediately marched out of Jerusalem with ten thousand men, and took Joppa in the face of the Syrian army; and then, having defeated Apollonius in a pitched battle, pursued him to Azotus, and burned that town, with its temple of Dagon, to the ground, killing and destroying more than eight thousand men. Having reduced several other cities in the neighbourhood, he returned to Jerusalem, laden with great spoils; upon which Alexander sent him a buckle of gold, and gave him the city of Ecron, with its territories, for a possession.†

Ptolemy Philometer having marched into Palestine, at the instance of Alexander, was received into all the cities of that country as a friend, and was met at Joppa by Jonathan, whom he received with great kindness, notwithstanding many complaints were made against him by his enemies; and Jonathan accordingly accompanied him as far as the river Eleutherus. Ammonius, the prime minister of Alexander, having formed a design against the life of Ptolemy,‡ which that monarch had discovered, but in vain demanded him to be delivered up by Alexander, he marched on to Antioch; when the inhabitants having, in the absence of Alexander, slain Ammonius, and opened their gates to Ptolemy, he advised them to declare for Demetrius; which they did, and

* 1 Macc. x. 70—73. † Prid. ii. 322.

‡ He suspected that the real object of the Egyptian was to possess himself of the Syrian monarchy, rather than to serve Alexander. Prid. ii. 323.

on the approach of Alexander with his army, he completely defeated and slew him, but died himself a few days afterwards of a wound received in the same battle; whereupon Demetrius succeeded quietly to the throne.*

On the death of Ptolemy Philometer, his brother Physcon, or Ptolemy Euergetes II, attempted to take possession of the vacant throne; when Onias and Dositheus came with an army of Jews to the assistance of Cleopatra, alike the sister and wife of the deceased monarch, and her infant son. By the mediation of Thermus, a Roman ambassador, it was agreed that Physcon should marry Cleopatra, and that her infant son should succeed his uncle, to the exclusion of his own children. On the day of the nuptials, however, Physcon murdered the child in its mother's arms; for which, and his other enormities, the inhabitants of Alexandria called him Kakergetes, instead of Euergetes.†

Jonathan being left undisturbed in Judea, laid siege to the fortress of Acra in Jerusalem; upon which Demetrius came to Ptolemais, and summoned Jonathan to attend him there. Without delaying the siege, the Jewish leader, with several of the other priests and elders, obeyed the summons; and by presents and judicious conduct appeased the monarch's wrath, who sent him back to Jerusalem laden with favours; confirming him in the high priesthood, and adding to Judea the three toparchies of Apharema, Lydda, and Ramatha, formerly belonging to Samaria; besides remitting all taxes and revenues for three hundred talents.‡

Jonathan not being able to take the fortress of Acra, applied to Demetrius to withdraw his garrison, which he promised to do, if Jonathan would send him some troops to assist him against the Antiochians, who were in rebellion against him. Jonathan accordingly sent three thousand

* Prid. ii. 324. † Prid. ii. 326. ‡ Prid. ii. 328.

men as a body guard to the tyrant, who so well performed their duty, that when a tumult broke out they slew one hundred thousand Antiochians, and thus restoring, for that time, the peace of the city, returned home with riches and credit.*

This vile monarch, however, kept none of his promises to the Jews, for he not only did not withdraw the garrison from Acra, but broke his treaty at Ptolemais, and threatened them with war and devastation if they did not pay the tribute as formerly.†

Diodotus, or Tryphon, who had been a lieutenant of Alexander's, having set up Antiochus, a son of that usurper, and defeated Demetrius in battle, Jonathan acknowledged the new adventurer for his sovereign, who renewed and confirmed all his former advantages, and made his brother Simon his commander, from the ladder of Tyre‡ to the borders of Egypt.§

Jonathan having marched to Damascus, and secured all the country for Antiochus, the forces of Demetrius invaded Galilee, when Jonathan marched to oppose him, leaving Simon in Judea. Having avoided an ambush that was laid for him, he defeated Demetrius, and Simon at the same time took the fortress of Bethsura, which had been long held by the heathen.‖

On his return to Jerusalem, Jonathan sent Numenius and Antipater as ambassadors to Rome, to renew the league which the senate had made with his brother Judas, and also to the

* Prid. ii. 329. † Prid. ii. 330.

‡ The ladder of Tyre is a mountain so called, lying on the sea coast between Tyre and Ptolemais. Prid. ii. 330. "It is a picturesque spot, the road being cut in the side of the perpendicular cliff on the sea shore, several hundred feet above the level of the water." Irby and Mangles, 197. Maundrell (p. 70.) says it was the work of Alexander the Great.

§ Prid. ii. 330. ‖ Prid. ii. 331.

Lacedemonians; and they were received by both states with great honour.*

Another and larger army of Demetrius having now collected together, Jonathan proceeded as far as Amathis to meet them: and having disappointed the enemy in an attempt to storm his camp by night, they fled, by means of false fires, beyond the river Eleutherus. Jonathan then defeated some Arabians of the party of Demetrius, and marching towards Damascus, reduced all the country into subjection to Antiochus; and Simon, at the same time, invading the land of the Philistines, took Joppa.†

On the return of both the brothers to Jerusalem, they assembled a national council, in which it was determined to restore the walls of the city, and thoroughly fortify the place; and in order to blockade the Syrian garrison in Acra, they erected a wall or mount between that fortress and the rest of the city; besides which, they restored and strengthened most of the other fortified places in Judea.‡

The only object which Tryphon had in setting up the youthful Antiochus, was in order to open a way for himself to the throne of Syria, intending to put that prince to death at a convenient opportunity. Aware, however, that he dared not attempt the execution of this villainous purpose, whilst the Jewish leader was in strength and power, he, by stratagem, prevailed on him to disband his army, and inveigled him into Ptolemais with only one thousand men, under pretence of putting him into possession of that place; when he suddenly assassinated his soldiers, and put Jonathan himself into chains.§

Simon having collected together the remains of the army, marched against Tryphon, who ventured not however to

* Prid. ii. 331.

† Prid. ii. 332. ‡ Prid. ii. 333. § Prid. ii. 333.

engage him in battle. The garrison in Acra being reduced to extremities for want of provisions, Tryphon made an ineffectual attempt to relieve them, after which he quitted the neighbourhood, having first put Jonathan to death, at Bascama,* in the land of Gilead, and shortly after caused his protégé Antiochus to be assassinated, and declared himself king of Syria.†

Simon having been invested with the office of high priest, sent the same ambassadors who had been so successful for his brother Jonathan, to Lacedemon and Rome, in both which cities they were received with the greatest respect, and Simon was recognized as the high priest and head of his nation.‡

He also sent a crown of gold to Demetrius, who thereupon confirmed him in all his privileges, both civil and ecclesiastical; and soon afterwards he was solemnly elected, by the whole Jewish nation, sovereign prince of Judea, as well as high priest, and both dignities vested in him and his successors.§

* Simon sent and fetched his bones from thence, and buried them in the sepulchre of his father at Modin, over which he afterwards erected a very famous monument of a great height, all built of white marble, curiously wrought and polished; near which he placed seven pyramids, two for his father and mother, four for his four brothers, and the seventh for himself; and then encompassed the whole with a stately portico, supported by marble pillars, each of an whole piece. All which was a very excellent work, and being erected on an eminence, was seen far off at sea, and was taken notice of as a remarkable sea mark on that coast, whereby seafaring men who sailed that way directed their course. Josephus (1 Macc. xiii. 25. 30. Jos. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 11.) tells us that it was remaining entire in his time, and then looked on as a curious and very excellent piece of architecture; and Eusebius also speaks of it as still standing when he wrote, which was above two hundred years after Josephus. Prid. ii. 335.

† Prid ii. 335. ‡ Prid. ii. 336.

§ Prid. ii. 337. In a public act or instrument which was made upon the occasion, engraven on tables of brass, and hanging up in the

Having assumed the sovereignty, he put all his fortifications into repair, especially Bethsura and Joppa, and furnished them with well appointed garrisons, and constituted the latter the seaport of Jerusalem, being at the distance of about forty miles.*

He then laid siege to Gazara which had revolted, and having taken it, built himself a palace there.†

The heathen garrison who had held the fortress of Acra nearly twenty-six years, having at length surrendered, Simon not only demolished the place, but took away and levelled the hill itself whereon it was built, and in the course of three years brought it to the level of the hill whereon the temple was built, at the same time, refortifying the mountain of the house of Jehovah, and making it stronger than ever.‡

John, the son of Simon, and afterwards called Hyrcanus, having shewn himself of approved valour and conduct, his father sent him to reside at Gazara, and appointed him general of all the forces.§

Simon also sent a third embassy to Rome for the confirmation of all his former alliances, and which he obtained, as well as letters written by L. C. Piso, at the command of the senate, to the kings of Syria, Egypt, and other states, declaring the Jews to be their allies and under their protection.‖

Demetrius having been taken prisoner by the king of Parthia, and afterwards married one of that monarch's daughters, his own queen Cleopatra, out of revenge, and for

sanctuary, the good deeds of Simon and his family were enumerated. From this time he took on him the state, style, and authority of prince, as well as high priest of the Jews, and was served in much plate of gold and silver, had many attendants, and in all things else appeared in the same manner of splendour and glory as other princes did. Prid. ii. 341. 345.

* Prid. ii. 337. † Prid. ii. 338. Strabo calls it Gadaris.
‡ Prid. ii. 339. § Prid. ii. 339. ‖ Prid. ii. 344.

the maintenance of the interests of her own children by him, married his brother, Antiochus Sidetes, who at first courted the assistance and countenance of Simon, making him many splendid promises; but as soon as he came into Syria, he rescinded the whole, and sent Athenobius, one of his generals, to demand the restoration of Gazara, Joppa, and the fortress of Jerusalem, and various other places. Simon offered to pay him one hundred talents for Gazara and Joppa, but claimed all the others as cities belonging to the Jews.*

Antiochus having dispatched Cendebæus with an army to enforce his pretensions, that general fortified Kedron; whereupon Judas and John, two of the sons of Simon, marched to meet him, and defeated the Syrian with the loss of two thousand men, and following up his advantage, John took Azotus and other fortresses, and burned them with fire. Judas was wounded, but both brothers returned in triumph to Jerusalem, having driven the Syrians out of the country.†

Simon had married one of his daughters to Ptolemy, son of Abubus, and made him governor of Jericho; and making a progress through the cities of Judah with his sons, Judas and Mattathias, in order to inspect their situation, was invited by his son-in-law to take up his abode in a castle which he had lately built. Simon apprehending no evil, accepted the invitation, but after an entertainment, and when Simon and his party had drank freely, Ptolemy assassinated them all, and immediately sent parties of soldiers to surprise John at Gazara, and the city of Jerusalem. This plan was arranged in union with Antiochus Sidetes, for the purpose of placing Ptolemy in the sovereignty of Judea. John, however, received information of the fate of his father and brethren, just time enough to be on his guard, and to arm the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and being declared high priest and prince of the Jews, he prepared to defend the territories.‡

* Prid. ii. 345. † Prid. ii. 346. ‡ Prid. iii. 353.

JOHN HYRCANUS.

Antiochus having marched into Syria with a large army, shut Hyrcanus up in Jerusalem, and turned the siege into a blockade, by placing seven camps around it. To such extremity were the besieged reduced, that John was obliged to sue for peace, which was granted upon honourable terms, though at so critical a juncture, that but for the moderation and clemency of the Syrian monarch, influenced by the especial providence of God, the Jewish name and nation might then have been nearly extinguished.*

Antiochus having invaded Parthia with a large army, ostensibly for the purpose of liberating his brother, Demetrius Nicator, was joined in that expedition by Hyrcanus with a body of Jews, who having participated in several victories, returned home to Jerusalem with credit and spoils, before the disaster happened which destroyed the Syrian monarch and his whole army.†

Hyrcanus took advantage of the death of Antiochus, and the distracted state of the Syrian empire, to consolidate his own principality, and took possession of Medeba, Samega, and several other places in Syria, Phœnicia, and Arabia; thenceforward rendering himself and his descendants wholly independant of the kings of Syria.‡

Amongst other places he took Sechem, the seat of the

* Prid. ii. 355. 358. Where see a long discussion as to the alleged violation of David's sepulchre, in order to pay the agreed ransom to Antiochus.

† He was defeated and slain by Phrahates, king of Parthia. Prid. ii. 363.

‡ Prid. ii. 364.

Samaritans, and destroyed the temple on mount Gerizin, which had been built by Sanballat.* He then subdued the Idumæans ;† and giving them their choice, whether they would embrace Judaism or quit the country, they very generally embraced the former of those alternatives, and became eventually absorbed in the Jewish nation.‡

As soon as Hyrcanus found himself firmly seated on his throne, he sent an embassy to Rome, to renew the alliance which his father had made with them; and his ambassadors were so well received, that the lordly senate took upon itself to decree the restoration of Gazara and Joppa to the Jews, freeing them from all tribute and dependance upon the Syrians. They also gave them money to bear their expenses, wrote letters to all their tributaries to give them a safe and honourable passage through their respective dominions, and promised to send ambassadors of their own, to see them put in secure possession of the places which they had thus decreed to them.§

The next year Hyrcanus renewed the embassy, by sending Alexander, Numenius, and Alexander, the son of Dorotheus, to return thanks to the senate for this favourable decree, and carrying them valuable presents.‖ The senate thereupon made another decree, confirming all that had been granted in favour of the Jews the preceding year.¶

* Prid. i. 489. 502. ii. 365. See post, in Israel.

† Judæi sunt, qui a natura ita fuerunt ab initio; Idumæi autem non fuerunt Judæi ab initio, sed Phœnices et Syri, a Judæis autem superati, et, ut circumciderentur, et in unam cum eis gentem coirent, et eisdem legibus subderentur adacti, Judæi sunt nominati. Prid. ii. 366. where see also a full discussion relating to these people.

‡ Prid. ii. 366. § Prid. ii. 371.

‖ Consisting of a shield and cup, both of solid gold, and of the value of fifty thousand pieces of their current coin. Prid. ii. 371.

¶ Prid. ii. 371.

Demetrius Nicator, having regained his liberty, had repossessed himself of the throne of Antioch, on the death of Antiochus Sidetes; but was finally defeated by Zebina,* an impostor, and slain at Tyre.† With this intruder, who obtained possession of a great part of the Syrian empire, Hyrcanus made a strict league and alliance, and availed himself of all these divisions and revolutions for consolidating and establishing his Jewish dominions.‡

Zebina being overthrown by Physcon, king of Egypt, Antiochus Grypus, or Antiochus Epiphanes II., and who was the second son of Demetrius Nicator, succeeded to the throne of Syria, and meditated a war with the Jews, probably in revenge for their alliance with the impostor; but whilst preparing his army, he was prevented from his purpose by a rebellion excited against him by his half brother, Antiochus Cyzicenus.§

During the wars between these rival brothers, and which ended in their dividing the empire between them, Cyzicenus reigning at Damascus, and Grypus at Antioch, Hyrcanus increased in riches and power; and finding himself secure from any attack from the Syrian armies, sent Aristobulus and Antigonus, two of his sons, to besiege Samaria; when the Samaritans sending for assistance to Cyzicenus, he approached the city to raise the siege, but was defeated and pursued as far as Scythopolis by the young Hyrcani. They then renewed the siege, and although an ineffectual attempt to relieve it was made by some troops of Cyzicenus, and Apion or Lathyrus, king of Egypt, it finally surrendered; whereupon

* He was the son of a broker of Alexandria, and feigned himself to be the son of Alexander Balas. Prid. ii. 373.

† Cleopatra, the wife of Demetrius, was a woman of most infamous character. Prid. ii. 374, 375. 379.

‡ Prid. ii. 374. § Prid. ii. 381.

Hyrcanus demolished the place, razed the houses to the ground, and drew trenches backwards and forwards across the ruins, and filled them with water.*

By the treachery of Epicrates, one of the generals of Cyzicenus, Hyrcanus acquired possession of Scythopolis, and the other places which the Syrians then held, and by his conquest of Samaria he became master of all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria; and thus finally established himself in a powerful, and during the remainder of his reign, in a quiet dominion.†

Towards the close of it, however, he involved himself in some uncomfortable disputes between the rival sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees,‡ in consequence of a vainglorious appeal he made to the former at a festival, and of which one of them took a very natural advantage;§ and in the result, occasioned the loss of his popularity, as well as much inconvenience to himself and his family:‖ and dying¶ the next year, was succeeded by his eldest son,**

ARISTOBULUS,

In the office of the high priesthood as well as of the sovereignty.

* "So saith Josephus, and Salianus cavils much at him for it, because Samaria stood upon an high hill. But Benjamin of Tudela, who was on the place, tells us in his itinerary, that there were upon the top of this hill many fountains of water; and from these, water enough might have been derived to fill these trenches." Prid. ii. 384, 385.

† Prid. ii. 385.

‡ Prid. ii. 397. 434. Where see a full account of all the Jewish sects.

§ Prid. ii. 386. ‖ Prid. ii. 396.

¶ Josephus alleges he was a prophet, and held communication with God, by the Bath-Kol, or the daughter of a voice; where see a curious description. Prid. ii. 389. 396.

** Prid. ii. 435.

One of the first acts of this prince was to shut up his mother in prison, and starve her to death, in consequence of her claiming a right to reign by virtue of her husband's will:* at the same time putting his three younger brothers into close confinement.†

He then proceeded to subdue the Ituræans, and after the example of his father with the Idumæans, to compel them either to embrace Judaism or abandon their dwellings.‡

On his return from this expedition he fell sick, and left his next brother, Antigonus, in command of the army in Ituræa; when his queen and some of his courtiers, envious of the favour in which Aristobulus held his brother, excited his mind to jealousy against him, and by means of misrepresenting a message to him, were the occasion of the assassination of Antigonus, by the unintentional orders of his brother.§ But remorse for the act, as well as for the murder of his mother, brought upon him a disease, which terminated his existence, during the first year of his reign.‖

* Prid. ii. 435. † Prid. ii. 436.

‡ Prid. ii. 436. See p. 403.

§ Prid. ii. 438.

‖ Prid. ii. 438. "And truly any one would be surprised at Judas upon this occasion. He was of the sect of the Essenes, and had never failed or deceived men in his predictions before. Now this man saw Antigonus as he was passing along by the temple, and cried out to his acquaintance, (they were not a few who attended upon him as his scholars) "O strange!" said he, "it is good for me to die now, since truth is dead before me, and somewhat that I have foretold hath proved false; for this Antigonus is this day alive, who ought to have died this day; and the place where he ought to be slain, according to that fatal decree, was Strato's tower, which is at the distance of six hundred furlongs from this place; and yet four hours of this day are over already, which point of time renders the prediction impossible to be fulfilled." And when the old man had said this, he was dejected in his mind, and so continued. But in a little

ALEXANDER JANNEUS.

On the death of Aristobulus, his three brothers were liberated out of prison, and Alexander, the eldest, succeeded to the throne; but the next or fourth son of Hyrcanus, having made some attempt to supplant him, was put to death.*

Alexander, having defeated the people of Ptolemais, and besieged their city, was compelled to raise that siege by the approach of Ptolemy Lathyrus, who then reigned in Cyprus.

Having enticed that prince into a treaty with him, they both fell on Zoilus of Dora, and Straton's tower; but Lathyrus having discovered that Alexander was intriguing with Cleopatra, his mother who reigned in Egypt, declared war against the Jewish prince, and defeated him in a pitched battle, with the loss of thirty thousand men, committing acts of the greatest cruelty.†

Cleopatra, having marched her forces to the relief of Alexander, took Ptolemais; but was so capricious that she would have seized upon Alexander and his territories, if she had not been dissuaded from it by Ananias, one of her generals, who was both a countryman and kinsman of the Jewish prince, and who returning safe to Jerusalem and recruiting his army, laid siege to Gadara;‡ which he took after a siege of ten months;§ and afterwards, Amathus, another city beyond

time news came that Antigonus was slain in a subterraneous place, which was itself also called Strato's tower, by the same name with that in Cæsarea, which lay by the seaside; and this ambiguity it was that caused the prophet's disorder." Jos. iii. 258. ii. 235.

* Prid. ii. 439. † Prid. ii. 442.

‡ Now *Om Keis*. Irby and Mangles relate that the ancient pavement of the city is still to be seen, and the traces of the chariot wheels visible in the stones; p. 296. Prid. ii. 443.

§ Prid. ii. 445.

Jordan, where he seized immense treasures belonging to Theodorus;* but that prince having overtaken him with a large army, defeated him with a loss of ten thousand men, and drove him back to Jerusalem with disgrace.†

Recruiting his forces, however, he seized upon Raphia and Anthedon, and laid siege to Gaza, which he got possession of by treachery, and in which he exercised great inhumanity, reducing that city to a heap of ruins, and then returned to Jerusalem.‡

Alexander had united in his own person the office of priest as well as prince, and in that character, on entering the temple on the feast of tabernacles, the Pharisees, who comprised the largest sect of the Jews,§ took that opportunity to insult him, by calling him slave, and pelting him and his attendants with citrons. His guards immediately slew six thousand of the multitude, and enclosed the court of the priests with a wooden partition, to protect him from similar insults in future.‖

And with the same view, being afraid to trust his countrymen, he called in a foreign force of six thousand Pisidians and Cilicians, as a body guard.¶

Afterwards he passed over Jordan, and reduced the Arabians, and the inhabitants of Moab and Gilead into subjection to him;** and thence proceeding towards Amathus, retook it and razed that city to the ground.††

Afterwards making an excursion into Gaulonitis, he was drawn into an ambush by Obedas, an Arabian king, wherein

* He was the son of Zeno Cotylas, prince of Philadelphia. Prid. ii. 445.

† Prid. ii. 445. ‡ Prid. ii. 446. § See p. 405.

‖ Prid. ii. 448.

¶ Prid. ii. 448. ** Prid. ii. 449. †† Prid. ii. 450

he lost the greatest part of his army, and scarcely escaped himself. On his return to Jerusalem a rebellion broke out amongst his subjects, which ended in a civil war.*

After it had raged with great fury, the prince tried to negociate with them, offering to grant every thing which they could in reason desire; but they answered this gracious overture by an insolent reply, that the only thing they wanted was that he would cut his own throat. Being unable, however, to cope with their sovereign, they applied to Demetrius Eucherus,† who then reigned at Damascus, for assistance, who invaded Judea with three thousand horse and forty thousand foot. Alexander, having marched against this army of invaders, was defeated with a great loss, and compelled to take shelter in the mountains.‡

In this great extremity he was saved from utter ruin by so extraordinary a re-action in the minds of his rebellious subjects, that six thousand of them, apparently pitying his then reduced situation, resorted to him in such numbers, that Demetrius, fearing lest all his Jewish troops, of whom he had a great number, would desert too, quitted Judea.§

Upon this event, Alexander was enabled to resume the offensive, but his troops were in such a state of insubordination, that he was not able to reduce them into subjection to his authority,‖ till by a decisive battle he cut off the major part of them in the rout; and then besieging and taking the city of Bethome, where the chief of those who had fled took refuge, he carried eight hundred of them to Jerusalem, and then per-

* Prid. ii. 451.

† He was son of Antiochus Gryphus. He was taken in battle by the Parthians, and died in captivity. Jos. ii. 242. iii. 243. 250. 261. et seq.

‡ Prid. ii. 454.

§ Prid. ii. 455. ‖ Prid. ii. 455.

petrated a most diabolical act of cruelty, which obtained him the surname of Thracidas.

Having appointed a festival, at which his wives and concubines were present, he ordered these eight hundred captive rebels to be crucified; and whilst lingering on the crosses, he ordered all their wives and children to be slain before their faces, himself and his guests enjoying the spectacle. This atrocious act had, however, the effect of quelling the rebellion; for the rest of the party, terrified by this proceeding, fled the country, in which their faction had lost not less than fifty thousand men.*

As soon as he was recovered from the effects of this rebellion, Alexander proceeded to repossess himself of several cities which had revolted from him during the late war; and marching over Jordan, he took and destroyed Pella, and drove the inhabitants into banishment. He afterwards took Dia, and laid siege to Gerasa,† Gaulana, and Seleucia, all of which places, with several others, he took.‡

The ensuing year he made himself master of the valley of Antiochus, and the strong fortress of Gamala; carrying with him to Jerusalem, Demetrius, the governor or prince of that city, as a prisoner. At the end of this expedition, which had occupied him three years, he was at length received by his subjects with great acclamations; but now enjoying full ease, he gave himself up to luxury and drunkenness.

A quartan ague, or some other severe disease, was the consequence of this habit of life; but in the hope of dissipating it by activity and exercise, the Jewish prince crossed Jordan with his army, and laid siege to Ragaba, a castle in the country of the Gerasens. This exertion and fatigue producing a contrary effect from that which he expected, the

* Prid. ii. 458.

† Prid. ii. 463. ‡ Prid. ii. 464.

monarch's disease grew worse and worse; and as he intended to leave the kingdom to his wife Alexandra, she expressed her fears that the Pharisaic faction would be too powerful for her and her children after his decease. To guard against this consequence, Alexander advised her, in case of his death before the conquest of the besieged city, to continue to prosecute the siege and conceal his death till she had taken it; and then to carry his corpse home with her to Jerusalem, and convene the heads of the Pharisees, and submit to their decision, whether the body of the deceased monarch should be buried with honours, or exposed to indignity; offering at the same time to govern the kingdom by their advice, and place them in all offices of trust and authority.

ALEXANDRA.

ALEXANDER dying soon after, his widow followed his specious but strange advice, and it so far succeeded that the resentment of the Pharisees was allayed, and the monarch was buried with great splendour, and Alexandra settled in the government of the country: one of her first acts being to invest her eldest son by the late monarch with the office of high priest.*

Having fulfilled her promise of placing the administration in the hands of the Pharisaic faction, they immediately revoked the decree of John Hyrcanus for abolishing the traditions, which they forthwith re-established; and from that time to the present, these miserable people like a sect of equally miserable and mistaken Christians,† have been seduced by

* Prid. ii. 467. † The papists.

traditionary lore to forsake the law of God, and believe in the inventions of wicked men and the doctrines of devils.*

The new ministry next released all their friends and connections out of confinement; and not contented with that measure, proceeded to prosecute with extreme severity those who were supposed to have advised the late prince in his proceedings against them, and especially the abettors of the abominable crucifixion.†

These proceedings as may be supposed were highly adverse to the inclinations of the queen, although she is suspected of having been always inclined to the doctrine of the Pharisees;‡ but she was obliged to submit, and even authorize them, from her dread of a civil war,§ till at length the friends of the late king, with his second son Aristobulus at their head, went in a body to Alexandra, and representing to her their wretched state, besought her either to put a stop to the proceedings of the Pharisees, to allow them to quit the country, or to place them in the different garrisons, so that they might have the means and opportunity of defending themselves. Alexandra adopted the latter alternative, which was perhaps the most politic course she could pursue.‖

Ptolemy, prince of Chalcis, at the foot of mount Libanus, having invaded Damascus, Alexandra sent Aristobulus to suppress the inroad, but he only seized upon Damascus, and employed his time chiefly in ingratiating himself with the army, and laying plans for his future elevation to the throne.¶

Tigranes, king of Armenia, and afterwards of Syria, laying siege to Ptolemais with an immense army, Alexandra sent ambassadors to him with large presents, in order to secure his friendship, and prevent him from invading her territories;

* Prid. ii. 468. † Prid. ii. 469.
‡ Prid. ii. 479.
§ Prid. ii. 469. ‖ Prid. ii. 472. ¶ Prid. ii. 475.

and which he received probably with more favour than he would have done, if his presence had not been required in another part of his dominions.*

Alexandra having attained the advanced age of seventy-three, fell sick, and it becoming evident that she could not long survive, Aristobulus, having resolved to seize the crown upon her death, left Jerusalem privately by night, and repaired to the castles in which his father's friends had at his instigation been placed as garrisons, and by whom he was so well received, that within a fortnight he was in possession of twenty-two of the fortresses of Judea. But, besides his own friends and partizans, both the army and the people were ready to declare for him, so oppressively had the Pharisaic administration conducted itself. As soon, however, as the Pharisees discovered how Aristobulus was likely to succeed, they placed Hyrcanus at their head, and went to the dying queen for her advice and instructions; but she told them, that as she was no longer able to give directions about worldly affairs, they must manage for themselves as well as they could; and dying soon afterwards left Hyrcanus heir of all her possessions.†

HYRCANUS II.

Hyrcanus II. accordingly assumed the diadem, and the Pharisees supported him at first with all their power; but Aristobulus having collected an army, a decisive battle took place near Jericho, where most of the troops of Hyrcanus going over to his brother, the former was obliged to retreat to Jerusalem, and shut himself and his followers up in the

* Prid. ii. 476. † Prid. ii. 480.

castle of Baris, where the wife and children of Aristobulus were confined as hostages. But the few troops which remained with him at last going over to Aristobulus, Hyrcanus was compelled to submit to an arrangement, by which he resigned both the government and priesthood to his brother, upon condition that he should be allowed to live in peace and quiet, and enjoy his private fortune without molestation.*

The course of the history of this very interesting and wonderful people now approaches New Testament times, and we shall soon meet with names, with which the perusal of that portion of the sacred volume makes us familiar. The peace which had been established between the two brothers appears to have been sincere; and there is no probability that either of them would have violated their mutual engagements, if a more mischievous spirit had not excited feuds between them. Such a spirit unhappily was found in Antipas or Antipater, an Idumæan, and who, or whose family, had embraced Judaism upon the conquest of that country by Hyrcanus I.†

Being of a noble family he had been made governor of Idumea under Alexander Janneus and his queen Alexandra; but, after their decease identifying himself with the fortunes of their son, Hyrcanus II, when that prince was deposed, he lost all prospect of future advancement.‡

Having induced Aretas, king of Arabia Petræa, to furnish him with an army, he with difficulty, and under the misrepresentation that his brother intended to assassinate him, prevailed upon Hyrcanus to fly from Jerusalem, and place himself at the head of the Arabian army; with which, to the amount of fifty thousand men, he marched towards Jerusalem, and defeating Aristobulus drove him into the city, when that prince was obliged to take refuge in the mountain of the

* Prid. ii. 480. † See p. 402. ‡ Prid. ii. 497

temple, where all the priests joined him, but most of the people revolted to Hyrcanus.*

On the approach of the passover, Aristobulus and his party, being greatly in want of lambs and beasts for the sacrifices, made a treaty with their besiegers to supply them on receiving payment, and the money was accordingly let down to them over the wall; but they kept the money and refused to supply the animals, and thereby sacrilegiously occasioned the worship of God to be neglected. At the same time the besiegers committed another act of great cruelty and wickedness; for Onias, a man of great sanctity of life, being then at Jerusalem, having, as was believed, obtained rain from heaven in a time of great drought by his prayers, they concluded that his curses would be equally effectual; and, therefore, bringing him forth before the army, they urged him to curse Aristobulus and all his party. The holy man long resisted all importunity; but finding there was no resource he devoutly prayed, "O Lord God, rector of the universe, since those that are with us are thy people, and they that are besieged in thy temple are thy priests, I pray that thou wouldst hear the prayers of neither of them against the other;" upon which the besiegers were so enraged, that they stoned him to death upon the spot.†

Soon after these events, Scaurus, one of the lieutenants of Pompey,‡ the Roman general, being at Damascus with a detachment of troops, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus both sent to him for assistance; but accepting of the offers of the former, as did also Gabinius, another of the same general's lieutenants, who was also in the province, they sent word to Aretas

* Prid. ii. 479. † Prid. ii. 498.

‡ Pompey had been appointed by the senate to succeed Lucullus in the government of Asia, chiefly with a view to finish the war against Mithridates and Tigranes. Prid. ii. 480.

to draw off his forces; and that prince immediately raising the siege, Aristobulus followed him with what troops he could collect, and defeated him with great slaughter at a place called Papyrion, in which battle a great many Jews of the party of Hyrcanus perished, and amongst the rest Cephalion, the brother of Antipater.*

Pompey having at length arrived at Damascus, kept a sort of court there, when the ambassadors of several neighbouring potentates attended him, and amongst others, some from Judea, who presented him with a vine of gold,† of the value of four hundred talents, which was afterwards deposited in the temple of Jupiter in the capitol of Rome, inscribed as the gift of Alexander,‡ king of the Jews.§

After prosecuting the war against Mithridates, Pompey returned again into Cœle-Syria, when Antipater, on the part of Hyrcanus, and Nicodemus, on behalf of Aristobulus, both appealed to him respecting the controversy between those two unhappy brothers, whom their respective factions would not suffer to live in peace. Pompey dismissed them both with every appearance of impartiality; but, at the same time, ordering them to appear personally before him, when he would decide equitably between them. Nicodemus, however, injured his master's cause by complaining of the extortion of the four hundred talents by Scaurus, and three hundred by Gabinius, before alluded to.‖

Pompey having been obliged to prosecute the conclusion of the Mithridatic war,¶ the cause between the rival brothers

* Prid. ii. 498.

† A vine or garden, called Terpule, the delight. Jos. li. 258.

‡ Prid. ii. 498.

§ They would not own Aristobulus to be king, and, therefore, put his father's name upon it, instead of his. Prid. ii. 499.

‖ Prid. ii. 501.

¶ Prid. ii. 501—506. Where see a concise account of the Mithridatic war, and the character of that monarch.

was postponed till the return of the Roman general, when both of them, with their respective partisans, appeared before him. There was, however, a third party of Jews who were alike hostile to the claims of each, and who pleaded that they might not be governed by a king; that it had been formerly the usage of their nation to be governed by the high priest of the God they worshipped, who, without assuming any other title, administered justice to them according to the laws and constitutions transmitted down to them from their forefathers; that it was true indeed the two contending brothers were of the sacerdotal race; but they had changed the former manner of the government, and introduced another form, that they might thereby subject the people to slavery.*

Hyrcanus relied upon his right of primogeniture, against which Aristobulus alleged his brother's incapacity, and the necessity of a more efficient administration. Pompey not wishing to take an active part in Jewish affairs till he had finished his war with Aretas, suspended his decision; but Aristobulus anticipating the prejudices of the Roman general, retired from Damascus without taking leave, and returned home to Jerusalem, and prepared for war, which greatly incensed Pompey.†

Pompey having compelled Aretas to submit to him, marched into Judea, towards the castle of Alexandrion,‡ which Aristobulus had strongly fortified. Pompey having sent for him, he came to him, by the persuasion of his friends, very unwillingly, two or three times; but continuing his warlike preparations notwithstanding, the Roman general at last compelled him to surrender all his castles to him. On

* Prid. ii. 507. † Prid. ii. 508.

‡ A strong fortress situated in the entrance of the country, on an high mountain, built by Alexander, the father of Aristobulus. Prid. ii. 508.

his return to Jerusalem, however, he prepared for war, but evidently fluctuating between hope and fear.*

The wily Roman saw well enough how to make his advantage of such vacillation; and, therefore, marching first to Jericho, and thence to Jerusalem, Aristobulus sent out to meet him, and offered a general submission and a sum of money, which Pompey accepted. But when Gabinius approached to receive the stipulated tribute and ratify the treaty, he found the gates shut against him, which so incensed Pompey, that he confined Aristobulus, whom he had retained in his camp, in chains, and marched to Jerusalem.†

The party of Aristobulus returned into the mountain of the temple, and breaking down the bridges over the deep vallies and ditches which surrounded it, resolved to defend it to the last extremity. But Hyrcanus and his party not only received the Roman army into the city, but supplied them with materials to besiege their fellow citizens.‡

At the end of three months,§ Pompey succeeded in obtaining possession of the temple of Jerusalem, destroying twelve thousand Jews, and committing many acts of great cruelty.‖

* Prid. ii. 509. † Prid. ii. 512.

‡ Prid. ii. 512.

§ It is remarkable that, according to Josephus, this took place on a solemn fast annually observed on account of the former taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Prid. ii. 514. i. 91. See p. 268.

‖ "Amongst all this scene of dreadful destruction, it is remarked that the priests that were then in the temple went on with the daily service of it, without being deterred either by the rage of their enemies, or the death of their friends; choosing rather to lose their lives amidst the swords of the prevailing adversary, than desert the service of their God; and many of them, while they were thus employed at this time, had their own blood mingled with the blood of the sacrifices which they were offering, and fell themselves, by the

Not content with his general success, the Roman general and his officers penetrated into the holy of holies,* which greatly incensed the Jews; abstaining, however, from taking any part of the treasures there deposited for sacred purposes, and directing the temple to be purified, and the service to be continued there as before.†

Before he quitted Jerusalem, Pompey demolished the walls of the city, restored Hyrcanus to the office of the priesthood, and made him prince of the country, upon payment of a tribute to the Romans; but would not allow him to wear a diadem, or extend his borders beyond the old limits of Judea, at the instigation of the Jews, who were now as tired of a king as they had formerly‡ been anxious for one; and who no longer wished to be like the rest of the nations in that respect.§

swords of their enemies, a sacrifice to their duty; which was an instance of steady constancy much admired by Pompey himself, and is scarce any where else to be thoroughly paralleled." Prid. ii. 514.

* When Pompey, using or abusing the right of conquest, entered into the holy of holies, it was observed with amazement, "Nulla intus Deûm effigie, vacuam sedem et inania arcana." Tac. Hist. v. 9. It was a popular saying with regard to the Jews—

Nil præter nubes et cœli numen adorat.

Gibbon, ii. 273.

Read also the whole of the fifth book of the history of Tacitus for an extraordinary perversion of the origin and history of the Jews.

† "This did not, however, expiate for his profanation of God's holy temple, and the impiety of which he made himself guilty thereby. Hitherto he had found wonderful success in all his undertakings, but in this act it all ended. For hereby having drawn God's curse upon him, he never prospered after. This over the Jews was the last of his victories." Prid. ii. 515.

‡ 1 Sam. viii. 19.

§ The tyranny of Alexander Janneus had made the Jews weary of regal government; and, therefore, they had formerly petitioned Pompey for the abolishing of it, at the time when he heard the cause of the two brothers at Damascus; and in compliance with them, he

Having rebuilt Gadara,* which had been lately destroyed by the Jews, he placed that and the whole province of Syria under the presidency of Scaurus, and took with him Aristobulus, with his sons Alexander† and Antigonus, and two of his daughters, as captives, to adorn his triumph.‡

Scaurus having involved himself in a war with Aretas, king of Arabia Petræa, had nearly met the fate of Charles XII. at Pultowa; but was rescued from his danger by Hyrcanus, who relieved his difficulties, and by Antipater, who negociated a peace for him on payment of three hundred talents of silver. But Scaurus was recalled, and Marcius Philippus made president of Syria in his room.§

On Pompey's arrival at Rome, Aristobulus and his son Antigonus were led as captives in his triumph, the former of whom he afterwards kept in prison.‖

Alexander, the eldest son of Aristobulus, returned to Judea, and having collected an army of ten thousand foot and one thousand five hundred horse, seized upon Alexandrium, Macherus, Hyrcania, and several strong castles which he fortified. Hyrcanus not venturing to meet his nephew in the field, and being prohibited by the Romans from rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, solicited the help of Gabinius, who had succeeded Marcius Phillippus as president of Syria, and who thereupon with M. Antonius, his general of horse, came into Judea with a large army, and being joined by Antipater and other partizans of Hyrcanus, defeated Alexander with

went so far as to take away the diadem and the name of king, though he did not the power. For when he restored Hyrcanus, he gave him the sovereign authority, though under another style.

* A strong city, the capital of Perea, on the borders of the lake of Genesareth. Butler, 210. Wells, ii. 183. Jos. iv. 96.

† Alexander made his escape during the march, and returned into Judea, where he raised new troubles. Prid. ii. 516.

‡ Prid. ii. 516. § Prid. ii. 518. ‖ Prid. ii. 519.

the loss of three thousand men, and shut him up in Alexandrium. They were, however, prevented from coming to extremities by the intervention of the mother of Alexander, through whose mediation a treaty of peace was concluded upon; Alexander surrendering all his castles, which were immediately razed to the ground, and being himself dismissed with pardon and impunity.*

After this arrangement, Gabinius proceeded to Jerusalem, and confirmed Hyrcanus in the high priesthood, but changed the form of the civil government, by depriving him of the regal or princely power, abolishing the great and inferior Sanhedrims, dividing the whole of Judea into five provinces, and establishing a supreme and independent government in each of the following places, viz. Jerusalem, Jericho, Gadara, Amathus, and Sepphoris.†

Aristobulus and his son Antigonus having made their escape from Rome, and being joined by Pitholaus, formerly a partisan of Hyrcanus, soon collected an army and possessed himself of Alexandrium and fortified it; and proceeding towards Macherus with the same object, was overtaken by Sisenna, a son of Gabinius, with his two lieutenants, Antonius and Servilius, who defeated him with the loss of five thousand men; and having taken Macherus where he had retreated, made him and his son Antigonus prisoners, and sent him back to Rome, but Antigonus was released according to the promise made by the Roman general.‡

Gabinius having engaged to restore Ptolemy Auletes§ to the throne of Egypt, and to dispossess Archelaus,‖ the then

* Prid. ii. 529. † Prid. ii. 530. ‡ Prid. ii. 532.

§ Or the piper. Prid. ii. 496.

‖ His father was one of the generals of Mithridates; but having afterwards joined the Romans, he was by Pompey made high priest of the moon, the great goddess of the Comanians, in Pontus, wi

reigning monarch, sent forward M. Antonius to seize the passes; in which he was much assisted by Hyrcanus and Antipater, who provided the Romans with supplies, and gave them letters to the Jews residing at Onion, by whose assistance Antony was enabled to make himself master of Pelusium.*

Whilst Gabinius was in Egypt with the main body of the Roman forces, Alexander, the eldest son of Aristobulus, collected together a large army and destroyed a great number of the Romans, and drove the rest to take refuge in mount Gerizim, where he besieged them. But, upon the return of the Roman general, a battle took place† between their respective armies, in which Alexander was defeated with the loss of ten thousand men, when Gabinius going to Jerusalem, settled all things there according to the mind of Antipater.‡

Crassus, having succeeded Gabinius in the province of Syria, marched to Jerusalem for the purpose of seizing upon all the treasures in the temple; when Eleazer, one of the priests, aware of his iniquitous object, offered to discover to him a concealed bar of gold§ if he would take an oath to spare all the rest. Upon receiving the shining treasure, however, it only served to inflame his cupidity; for in violation of his

sovereign authority over the inhabitants of the place; of whom no fewer than six thousand persons were devoted to the service of that goddess. He afterwards became king of Egypt, by marrying Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy Auletes. Prid. ii. 502. 528.

* Prid. ii. 534.

† Near mount Tabor. Jos. iii. 274.

‡ Prid. ii. 536.

§ Of the weight of three hundred Hebrew minæ; and which for better security had been put into a beam, which he had caused to be made hollow for the reception of it; and placing this beam over the entrance which was from the holy place into the holy of holies, caused the veil which parted these two places to be hung thereat. Prid. ii. 538.

oath, he plundered the temple of all its wealth, to the amount of £2,000,000 of our money, or ten thousand talents.*

On the death of Crassus, at the battle of Carrhæ,† the command of the routed remains of the Roman army devolved upon Cassius, who retreated with it into Syria; and, having recovered Tyre, laid siege to Tarichæa, a city on the lake of Gennesareth, where Pitholaus, with the remaining partisans of Aristobulus, had shut themselves up. Having taken the place, Cassius made all the garrison captives, except Pitholaus, whom he put to death by the advice of Antipater; and afterwards forced Alexander to accept of terms of peace.‡

The jealousies between Pompey and Julius Cæsar having at length involved the whole Roman empire in a civil war; one of the first acts of the latter, on coming to Rome, was to liberate Aristobulus from his confinement, and placing two legions under his command, to send him home to Jerusalem, with instructions to raise Syria, Phœnicia, and Arabia in favour of the Cæsarean interest. Some of Pompey's partisans, however, contrived to poison him on his march; and his son Alexander having raised some forces in expectation of his father's arrival, he was arrested by Q. Metellus Scipio, and being carried to Antioch, and condemned by a formal trial, was beheaded by the orders of Pompey.§

The next public transaction in which the Jews bore a conspicuous part was when Cæsar, having imprudently followed Pompey after the battle of Pharsalia, into Egypt, with too small a number of forces, became shut up in Alexandria, and

* Prid. ii. 539.

† He was repeatedly misled by pretended deserters from the enemy, who at last conducted him into bogs and morasses, where both he and his army were cut to pieces; for being justly destined to destruction on account of his impious sacrilege at Jerusalem, God cast infatuations into all his counsels. Prid. ii. 543.

‡ Prid. ii. 544. § Prid. ii. 549.

found himself in danger of being overpowered by the Egyptians in the interest of Ptolemy, Cæsar having formed an illicit connexion with, and, therefore, favouring the interests of, his sister Cleopatra.* Having dispatched Mithridates, one of the sons of Orodes, king of Parthia, to collect and bring him succours from Syria, and the neighbouring provinces, he was furnished by Antipater and Hyrcanus with a large auxiliary force of Jews, the former marching at their head and displaying great prowess throughout the Alexandrian war,† besides rendering the additional service of inducing the Jews who inhabited the city of Onion to declare in favour of Cæsar.‡ In return for these services, before Cæsar quitted Egypt, he confirmed the Jews in the enjoyment of all their ancient privileges in Alexandria; and ordered a pillar to be erected, whereon, as well the privileges themselves, as his decree confirming them, were inscribed.§

Nor was this all the advantage which Antipater derived from his Egyptian expedition, for Cæsar having at length left Alexandria in order to resist the inroads of Pharnaces, king of Pontus, in passing through Syria; he was applied to by Antigonus, the surviving son of Aristobulus, who besought him to adopt the interests of his family, urging as a claim that both his father and brother had lost their lives in his cause; making, at the same time, heavy complaints against

* Prid. ii. 557.

† In a temple, called the Serapeum, at Alexandria, Ptolemy Soter and his successors collected and deposited a famous library. And another in a museum or college in a particular part of the same city, called Bruchium. During this war, the library at Bruchium, with four hundred thousand volumes, was accidentally burned; as was the Serapeum, with its subsequent valuable addition, by the Saracens, (A. D. 642.) upon the ground that the Coran alone was necessary for mankind. Prid. ii. 33. 35. See p. 357.

‡ Prid. ii. 562. § Prid. ii. 564.

both Antipater and Hyrcanus. The interest of the former, however, was so great, and such his influence over the Roman commander, and so necessary was he become to the Romans, that he not only refused to listen to the representations of Antigonus, but confirmed Hyrcanus in the office of high priest and the principality of Judea, to him and his family in perpetuity, appointing Antipater, at the same time, to be procurator of Judea under him; and directed that his decree should be engraven in tables of brass and Latin, and be hung up in the capitol of Rome, and in the temples of Tyre, Sidon, and Askalon, in Phœnicia.*

By virtue of this decree, Antipater settled the civil government of Judea under Hyrcanus, in the same manner as it had been previous to the ordinances of Gabinius, all of which he abolished, and appointed Phasælus, his own eldest son, governor of Jerusalem, and Herod, his second son, governor of Galilee.†

One of the first acts of the latter prince, who was then in the vigour of youth, was to suppress a gang of banditti who invested and ravaged Galilee and the neighbouring parts; and having taken Hezekiah, their ringleader, with several of their associates, he put them all to death, and thus attracted the notice and favour of Sextus Cæsar, the president of the province.‡

Those, however, who envied the growing greatness of Antipater and his family, represented this transaction to Hyrcanus as a violation of the laws by putting the above mentioned depredators to death without a legal trial, and induced him to summon the young governor before the Sanhedrim. Herod appearing there clothed in purple, and surrounded by his guards, neither Hyrcanus nor any other member of the Sanhedrim durst accuse him, except Sameas, who not only

* Prid. ii. 565. † Prid. ii. 568. ‡ Prid. ii. 568.

charged him with a violation of the law, but boldly reproved him for appearing before the court in a way that was calculated to overawe their sentence and pervert the course of justice. Nor was this all, for this intrepid man also reproached Hyrcanus and his brethren for their pusillanimity, in allowing themselves to be thus intimidated; and forewarned them, that though they now spared Herod, the time was not far off when he would not spare them; but that the just judgment of God should, by his hands, be executed upon them. Hyrcanus, however, did all he could to obtain the acquittal of Herod, influenced as well by his personal regard for the youth, as by a threatening letter he had received from Sextus Cæsar. But the rest of the court being roused by the address of Sameas, Hyrcanus perceived he could not obtain an acquittal for his favourite; and therefore to avoid the disgrace of a condemnation, adjourned the court till the next day, and in the mean time assisted Herod to fly, during the night, to Damascus, where he placed himself under the protection of Sextus Cæsar.*

Having given that general a sum of money, he obtained from him the government of Cœle-Syria, and collecting another army he marched into Judea, with the avowed intention of deposing Hyrcanus, and destroying the whole Sanhedrim; but from the commission of these enormities he was prevented by the interposition of his father, Antipater, and his elder brother, Phasael.†

In a sort of civil feud which took place between the Roman generals, Sextus Cæsar and Antistius Vetus, on the one hand, on the part of Cæsar, and Cœcilius Bassus on the other, a general of the Pompeian faction, Antipater and his sons sided with the former, and rendered them considerable services.‡

* Prid. ii. 569. † Prid. ii. 569. ‡ Prid. ii, 571.

In this feud Sextus Cæsar was assassinated, and Statius Murcus was appointed by Cæsar to succeed him in the presidency.*

In the fifth consulate of Julius Cæsar, Hyrcanus applied to him for permission to restore the walls of Jerusalem, which had been pulled down by Pompey; and this request the dictator readily granted, in consideration of the services he had rendered both in Egypt and Syria. A decree having accordingly been passed at Rome for the purpose, Antipater set about the work, and the fortifications of the city were restored as in former times.†

After the assassination of Cæsar‡ by the hands of the

* Prid. ii. 576. † Prid. ii. 576.

‡ "Cæsar was a very extraordinary person, of great parts, polite literature, and thorough abilities in all the arts of war and civil government, and of equal diligence and application in the use and pursuit of both. However, many of his enterprises being entered upon with great rashness, this abundantly proves that he owed the success which he had in them, only to an overruling power of providence on his side: which having set him up as a fit instrument for the work which he brought to pass, carried him through all dangers and hazards, to the full accomplishing of it; and after that, when there was no more for him to do, cast him off to perish like a rod, which is thrown into the fire when no more to be used. The work was God's; but it being malice and ambition that excited him to be the instrument in the execution of it, he justly had for the reward thereof that destruction by which he fell. Having found, in two or three of his attempts, the hand of providence with him, he afterward, presuming hereon, often ventured on very hazardous undertakings, without having any other prospect of succeeding in them, than from the confidence which he had in that which he called his good fortune. And he never failed in any of them; for he fought fifty battles without missing of success, unless at Pharus, where he swam for his life, and once at Dyrrachium. And in these battles he is said to have slain one million one hundred and ninety-two thousand men; which sufficiently proves him to have been a terrible scourge in the hand of God, for the punishi

Roman patriots as they are called,* Cassius proceeded into Syria and raised a considerable army, where being joined by Murcus, he marched into Phœnicia and Judea, and obtained possession of both those countries, and got together no less than twelve legions of soldiers. For the maintenance of so large an army he was obliged to levy heavy contributions;

the wickedness of that age in which he lived: and consequently he is to be reputed the greatest pest and plague that mankind then had therein. But, notwithstanding this, his actions have with many acquired great glory to his name; whereas, true glory is due only to those who benefit, not to those who destroy mankind." Prid. ii. 577, 578. And how close an imitation of his character has been raised up in our own times, in the person of Napoleon Buonaparte, who, however, fell very short of his prototype in whatever was praiseworthy.

* "This was a most base and villanous act, and the more so, as the prime authors of it, Marcus Brutus, Decimus Brutus, Cassius, and Trebonius, and some others of them, were those whom Cæsar had in the highest manner obliged; yet it was executed under the notion of an high heroic virtue, in thus freeing their country from one whom they called a tyrant; and there are not wanting such as are ready, even in our days, to applaud the act. But divine justice declared itself otherwise in this matter; for it pursued every one of them that were concerned herein, said to be sixty in number, (Prid. ii. 673.) with such a just and remarkable revenge, that they were every man of them cut off in a short time after, in a violent manner, either by their own or other men's hands.—Prid. ii. 577. At the battle of Philippi, Brutus and Cassius were both defeated by Octavianus (Augustus) and Mark Anthony, and by a just retribution of divine vengeance upon them, they were both of them, that is, Cassius first, and afterwards Brutus, forced to murder themselves; and what was most signal herein, they both did it with the same swords with which they had murdered Cæsar."—Prid. ii. 586. "The last survivor of the assassins was Cassius Parmensis, who, after the battle of Actium, fled to Athens, where being terrified with the like apparition which appeared to Brutus at Philippi, he was overtaken and put to death by the messengers of Octavianus."—Prid. ii. 673.

and Judea was taxed at seven hundred talents, which was soon raised by Antipater, and his sons Phasael and Herod, Malichus,* and others. Herod having first brought his quota, ingratiated himself much with Cassius; but Gophna, Emmaus, Lydda, Thamna, and some other cities of Judea, not being quite so much on the alert, Cassius caused all the inhabitants to be sold by auction for the raising of the money; and would have put Malichus to death for his failure, if Hyrcanus had not sent one hundred talents, out of his own treasures, to redeem him.†

Cassius and Murcus having marched into Laodicea, in order to suppress Publius Cornelius Dolabella, who had married Tullia, a daughter of Cicero, left Herod in the government of Cœle-Syria.‡

Malichus, who was envious of the influence of Antipater and his sons, laid a plot for taking away his life; but Antipater having received intimation of his design, prepared himself to disappoint it. Malichus, however, so lulled his suspicion, that he interceded with Murcus to spare his life, which that officer had intended to take away on account of various factious designs. Notwithstanding this obligation, Malichus persisted in his purpose; and one day when Antipater was dining with Hyrcanus, he bribed the butler to administer poison to him in a cup of wine, whereof he died. Malichus thereupon seized the government of Jerusalem with an armed force, and endeavoured to persuade Phasaelus and Herod that he was wholly innocent of their father's murder. Herod would have taken instant revenge, but Phasaelus recommended him to proceed by craft and stratagem, and therefore, affecting to

* He was a Jew by birth, and although next in power and authority to Antipater, who was an Idumean, was envious of the latter's superiority. Prid. ii. 583.

† Prid. ii, 582. ‡ Prid. ii. 583.

give credit to his protestations of innocence, they suspended their operations for the moment; and conducted themselves toward him as usual.

Herod, however, having communicated to Cassius the circumstances of his father's death, received permission from him to revenge it, who also sent orders to the commanders of the Roman garrison at Tyre, to assist him in the accomplishment of his design. Cassius having taken Laodicea, the princes and chief lords of Syria and Palestine proceeded thither with congratulations and presents; and Hyrcanus, Malichus, and Herod, having set out for that purpose, as they were drawing near to Tyre, Herod himself invited all the company to sup with him, and sent his servants forward under pretence of preparing for their reception, but with the secret orders of Cassius to the commanding officer in the garrison, who thereupon sent out a band of soldiers to meet the Jewish princes, and as Malichus approached the city they seized upon and slew him.*

It is alleged that had Malichus arrived safe at Tyre, his project was to have released his son, who was there in hostage, and then to have returned into Judea and excited a revolt, in the hope that, during the civil broils of the Romans, he might be able to seize upon and establish himself in the independent sovereignty of Judea.†

The friends of Malichus, however, having gained over Hyrcanus, and Felix, the commander of the Roman forces at Jerusalem, a brother of Malichus took possession of Massada, and several other castles in Judea, by permission of the former. Herod being then confined by sickness at Damascus, where Fabius commanded for the Romans, Phasaelus was left alone to support the interests of his faction; and having succeeded in driving Felix and all the opposite party out of Jerusalem,

* Prid. ii. 584. † Prid. ii. 585.

when Herod returned they soon overpowered the hostile party, and recovered Massada and all the other fortresses. They also upbraided Hyrcanus for ingratitude, but that breach was healed by Hyrcanus giving his granddaughter Mariamne to be betrothed to Herod.*

Antigonus, the youngest son of Aristobulus, was still living, and uniting himself with the remainder of the Malichæans, and being assisted by Marion, king of Tyre, Fabius, governor of Damascus, and Ptolemy, prince of Chalcis,† raised a considerable army with the professed object of recovering his father's throne and authority. But Herod having met him on the confines of Judea, defeated him, and recovering what Marion had taken in Galilee, he returned to Jerusalem in triumph.‡

The decisive battle of Philippi§ having placed the whole Roman empire at the command of the triumvirs,‖ Antony assumed the government of the Asiatic and African provinces, and affected more than regal state.¶ Amongst other

* Prid. ii. 587.

† The first of these engaged in this cause, out of the hatred he bore to Herod; the second, for the money which was given to hire him into it; and the last, by reason of the affinity that was between their families; for he had married a sister of Antigonus. Prid. ii. 587.

‡ Prid. ii. 588. § Prid. ii. 586.

‖ Mark Antony, Augustus, and Lepidus.

¶ Wherever he came, after his arrival in those parts, he had his chamber door every morning thronged at his levee by kings and princes from the eastern countries, or by ambassadors from others of them, to solicit his favour; and several of them brought with them their wives and daughters, that, prostituting them to his lust, they might thereby the better obtain their ends. Prid. ii. 588. We have another instance how little regard was at this time paid to the law of Jehovah (Lev. xix. 29.); and how sunk in debauchery the whole world was, including the Jews, from the circumstance that Antigonus

ambassadors and suppliants, several Jews of rank and consequence applied to him against Phasael and Herod; but the latter were so firmly settled in his good opinion, and Herod had bribed him so effectually, that they met with no success. On the other hand, other ambassadors came from Hyrcanus praying for the restoration of the lands and territories which Cassius had taken from them, and also for the redemption of those Jews whom he had sold into captivity, and these petitions were immediately granted.*

Having arrived at Daphne, near Antioch, one hundred of the principal Jews came to him with renewed complaints against the sons of Antipater, when he gave them a hearing and demanded of Hyrcanus, who was present, whom he thought the most proper person to conduct the civil government under him; and upon his declaring in favour of the two brothers, he appointed them to be tetrachs,† and committed all the affairs of Judea to their management, and imprisoned fifteen of the ambassadors, whom he would have put to death if Herod had not interceded for them. Such, however, was the discontent of the Jews, that notwithstanding their former discomfiture and narrow escape, upon Antony's coming to Tyre, no less than one thousand of them came to him with reiterated complaints against the two brothers; and which the imperious Roman construing into a tumultuous contempt of his former decision, ordered his troops to fall upon them, when they slew and wounded a great many.‡

Whilst Antony was living in the grossest criminality with

hesitated not to enter into a contract with the king of Parthia, to give up to him five hundred Jewish women, which must be taken to be for the purposes of lust. Prid. ii. 594. Well might our Lord say, (Luke, xviii. 8.) When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? And well might he say so still, even in this professing country.

* Prid. ii. 588. † Prid. ii. 589. ‡ Prid. ii. 589.

the infamous Cleopatra at Alexandria, the Parthians, with Labienus and the remains of the Pompeian faction, had invaded Syria with a powerful army; and having taken Sidon and Ptolemais, sent a detachment towards Judea, with the avowed purpose of setting Antigonus up as king of that country; upon a contract to deliver to Pacorus, the Parthian monarch, one thousand talents and five hundred Jewesses. Antigonus having collected an army of Jews near mount Carmel, and being joined by the Parthian general, marched into Judea, and defeating an army that was sent against him, followed them into Jerusalem; but being vigorously opposed by the two brothers, took shelter in the mountain of the temple, whilst the Herodians seized upon the palace. As the feast of Pentecost was approaching, and multitudes flocked to the city from all quarters, the waste of human blood became shocking even to the perpetrators, and Antigonus proposing to leave their disputes to the decision of the Parthian general,* to which, the two brothers having acceded, he was received into Jerusalem with five hundred horse, and lodged in Phasael's house; into whose confidence he so effectually insinuated himself, as to prevail upon him, contrary to the advice of Herod, to go with Hyrcanus upon an embassy to Barzaphanes, the prefect of Syria under Pacorus.†

Phasael and Hyrcanus were at first received by the Parthian general with distinguished honour, but he soon threw them into chains, a fate which had been also intended for Herod, but which he escaped by a sudden flight from Jerusalem, with his family, and such troops as he could hastily collect.

* Pacorus, cupbearer to Pacorus, the son of Orodes, king of Parthia. Prid. ii. 592.

† Prid. ii. 594.

In his retreat towards Massada,* he was repeatedly assaulted, both by the Parthians and Jews of the hostile faction, in several of which he obtained the advantage.†

On coming to Ressa, he was joined by his brother Joseph, with a large body of forces, but on his arrival at the fortress of Massada, he was obliged to dismiss nine thousand. Having placed eight hundred in the castle with his mother, sister, and other women of quality he brought with him from Jerusalem, and victualled the place, he left Joseph in command of it, and then marched with the troops whom he had retained to Petra,‡ in Arabia, to seek the assistance of Malchus, who had succeeded Aretas in the throne of that country. But Malchus, unmindful of the favours he had received from Herod, ordered him to quit his territories, upon which, dismissing most of his followers, he fled to Rhinocorura in Egypt.§

When the Parthians discovered the flight of Herod, they plundered Jerusalem and the neighbouring country, and then made Antigonus king of Judea, and gave Phasael and Hyrcanus up to him in chains. Anticipating that he should undergo a capital punishment, Phasael beat out his brains against the wall of the prison; and Antigonus having cut off the ears of Hyrcanus, in order to render him ever after incapable of exercising the office of high priest,‖ delivered him

* A castle built on the top of a very high mountain, near the west side of the lake Asphaltites, and the strongest fortress in all that country. Prid. ii. 595. Jos. iv. 261.

† It was in memory of one of these successful conflicts, which was fought with the Jews of the party of Antigonus, at the distance of about seven miles from Jerusalem, that he afterwards built a famous palace called Herodium. Prid. ii. 595. Jos. ii. 302. iii. 289.

‡ See p. 169.

§ Prid. ii. 596. See. p. 122. Now El-Arish.

‖ Lev. xxi. 16—24.

back again to the Parthians in order that his presence might not keep alive the hostile faction, and by them Hyrcanus was carried to Seleucia.*

But Antigonus had done but half his work whilst Herod was at liberty, for that able prince having gone from Rhinocorura to Rome, was there, by the joint interest of Octavius Cæsar and Mark Anthony, inaugurated by the senate king of Judea,† apparently without any original intention of his own.‡

HEROD THE GREAT.

Herod lost no time in rejoining his fleet which he had left at Brundusium, whence he sailed with all possible expedition to Ptolemais; and then raised the siege of Massada,§ which had been closely invested by Antigonus,‖ and after taking

* Prid. ii. 596.

† His utmost object seems to have been to have counteracted Antigonus, by obtaining the kingdom for Aristobulus, his brother-in law; but Anthony having suggested that it would be very advantageous to him in prosecuting the Parthian war, the senate made him king, contrary to their usual custom, which was scarcely ever to travel out of the regal line in whatever countries they subdued. Prid. ii. 598.

‡ On the rising of the senate, Herod was conducted by the consuls and other magistrates up to the capitol, Octavianus going on one side of him and Anthony on the other; and the decree being there deposited among the public records of the state, he was thereon solemnly inaugurated into the kingdom, according to the Roman usage. Prid. ii. 598.

§ Where his mother, sister, and Mariamne, his betrothed mistress, were shut up. Prid. ii. 599.

‖ They were so closely invested by Antigonus, that at one time they were absolutely without water, and were about to have broke

Joppa and Ressa, and being joined by Roman forces under Ventidius and Silo, who having defeated the Parthians in several battles, had driven them beyond the Euphrates,* he encamped before the walls of Jerusalem.†

The Roman commanders, however, made the most advantage they could of both the contending parties, screwing as much money as possible out of each of them; and at last, by secretly fomenting a mutiny amongst the Roman soldiers, the siege ended in the sacking and ruin of Jericho, and the Roman army going into winter quarters in Idumea, Samaria, and Galilee, where Herod had to provide them with supplies.‡

That prince, however, still kept the field with his own troops, part of which, under the command of Joseph, he sent into Idumea, to secure all there in his interest, and with the remainder he conducted his mother and friends into Samaria, where he left them under a strong guard; and occupied himself during the rest of the campaign, in reducing Sephoris in Galilee, and ridding the country of immense bands of robbers, who were so numerous as upon one occasion to stand a regular engagement with his troops, the left wing of which they temporarily defeated.§

through the besiegers; but the night before they were to have made the attempt, violent rains fell, which filled all their cisterns, and enabled them to hold out till Herod relieved them. Prid. ii. 599.

* Prid. ii. 597. † Prid. ii. 599. ‡ Prid. ii. 600.

§ By reason of the cragginess and steepness of those mountains, there was no scaling them from below, and to get down to them from above by any passage was altogether as impracticable; and, therefore, to ferret them out of their dens, he was forced to make certain chests, and filling them with soldiers, to let them down into the entrances of those caves by chains, from engines which he had fixed above. Prid. ii. 601, 602. It was about this period that Asinius Pollio was born, and which occasioned the fourth eclogue of Virgil, about which so much has been said and written. Prid. ii. 600. See Dr. Thornton's Virgil, Bp. Horsley's Nine Sermons, &c. &c. and for an account of the Sybilline oracles, see Prid. ii. 718.

Macheras, a Roman general, having been sent by Anthony to support Herod with two legions of one thousand horse, when he approached the walls of Jerusalem in order to confer with Antigonus, was beaten back by the archers and slingers who guarded the ramparts. Enraged at this repulse he slew all the Jews who came in his way, whether friends or foes, and amongst the rest many of Herod's partisans, which so incensed him, that he set off to Anthony to complain against Macheras. That Roman, however, followed him with so much expedition, that he overtook and made his peace with him; but Herod still pursued his journey, with a view to pay his respects to Anthony, leaving his brother in command of Judea, with strict orders not to engage in any military enterprise during his absence.*

Anthony who was then engaged in the siege of Samosata, received Herod, who rendered him considerable service in his operations against that place, with great honour.†

Joseph, regardless of his brother's injunctions, having engaged in an expedition against Jericho, was defeated and slain, upon which a general revolt from Herod took place in Galilee and Idumæa. Having accompanied Anthony as far as Daphne he returned to Judea, and coming to mount Libanus, raised eight hundred men, and with these, and the aid of two Roman cohorts, reduced the revolters into subjection; but proceeding to Jericho, in order to revenge his brother's death, he was routed by the Antigonians and severely wounded. Having collected, however, a fresh army, he encountered the enemy again under the command of Pappus, and in his turn defeated him with considerable loss, and then placed his troops in winter quarters.‡

Herod opened the next campaign with a considerable army, and immediately laid siege to Jerusalem, which he closely

* Prid. ii. 606. † Prid. ii. 606. ‡ Prid. ii. 608.

invested; but whilst the operations were going on, he went to Samaria to consummate his marriage with Mariamne, whom he had formerly betrothed.*

Being joined by Sosius, whom Anthony had left as his lieutenant in Syria, they prosecuted the siege with eleven legions, and six thousand horse, besides auxiliaries, and with much difficulty took the city at the end of six months, the Romans committing great slaughter and cruelty in spite of all that Herod could do to prevent it; for upon making complaint to the Roman general, that he would make him king of a desert only, he obtained no redress, and was finally obliged to redeem the city and inhabitants with a large sum of money.†

Antigonus surrendered himself prisoner to Sosius, but discovered such abjectness of mind, that the Roman treated him with contempt, and sent him to Anthony in chains, who had intended to reserve him for his triumph; but at the repeated solicitations of Herod, excited thereto by the unwillingness of the Jews to submit to his authority, he at last put him to death as a common malefactor, and with him ended the male line of the Asmonean family.‡

Herod having at last attained the object of his ambition, put to death great numbers of the opposite faction, and amongst others, all the Sanhedrim except Pollio and Sameas,§ who had declared in his favour. Not, however,

* She was the daughter of Alexander, the son of king Aristobulus, by Alexandra, the daughter of Hyrcanus II, and therefore was granddaughter to both these brothers. She was a lady of extraordinary beauty and great virtue, and in all other laudable qualifications accomplished beyond most others of her time. Prid. ii. 610

† Prid. ii. 611. ‡ Prid. ii. 612.

§ These were the famous Hillel and Shammai, from whose school all the modern rabbies and their rubbish have sprung. Prid. ii. 615. et seq.

as it would seem through any affection which they bore to him, for they told the people that their sins were now grown to such a height, that God would deliver the city into the hands of Herod as a just punishment, and therefore, that it would be in vain to resist him. The rest of the Sanhedrim, however, cried out, The temple of Jehovah, The temple of Jehovah, and excited the people to a fierce and obstinate resistance; in revenge of which it was, that as soon as Herod got them into his power, he put them all to death; as well as from the recollection of their having sat in judgment upon him for the death of Hezekiah,* whilst he was governor of Galilee.†

On the death of Antigonus, Herod made Ananelus high priest, an obscure member of the pontifical family, then residing in Babylonia, and who had been formerly known to him; besides which, his foreign parentage and little acquaintance with the local politics of Judea, together with his obscurity, made it unlikely that he would oppose Herod in his views.‡

Hyrcanus had still continued a prisoner at Seleucia, but when Phrahates§ succeeded his father Orodes on the throne of Parthia, although a man of most detestable cruelty, he shewed both kindness and generosity towards the Jewish

* See p. 425. † Prid. ii. 614. ‡ Prid. ii. 647.

§ His father had surrendered up the kingdom to him during his own life, and the first act of his power was to murder all his brothers by another mother; and, upon his father's expressing resentment, he murdered him also. At first he attempted it only by giving him hemlock. But that, instead of killing him, became a medicine to cure him of the dropsy which he then laboured with; for it working off in a violent purgation, it carried off the disease with it. And, therefore, to make sure work of it, the parricide caused him to be stifled to death in his bed; and after that he put to death all his other brothers. Prid. ii. 646.

prince; for understanding who he was, he released him from his chains, and allowed him to live at full liberty amongst the Jews who then resided in Babylonia, and who paid him so much respect, that he might have lived and died amongst them in peace and affluence. The amor patriæ, however, predominated over all other feelings,* and receiving information that Herod was established on the throne of Judea, he made no doubt that prince would gladly receive and protect him, and this feeling Herod himself so effectually encouraged, and so earnestly invited his return, that Hyrcanus, contrary to the advice of all his friends, left Babylonia and returned to Jerusalem.†

The appointment of Ananelus to the office of the high priesthood had given great offence both to Mariamne, Herod's queen, and to Alexandra, her mother, for they considered that it belonged of right to Aristobulus, the son of Alexander, who had been put to death by Q. M. Scipio.‡ Alexandra, indeed, had written to Cleopatra, and applied to Dellius, a favourite of Anthony's, to use their influence with the Roman commander; so that Herod found it necessary, in order to restore peace in his own family and avoid some unpleasant rupture, to depose Ananelus and appoint Aristobulus, who was then only seventeen years of age, in his room.§

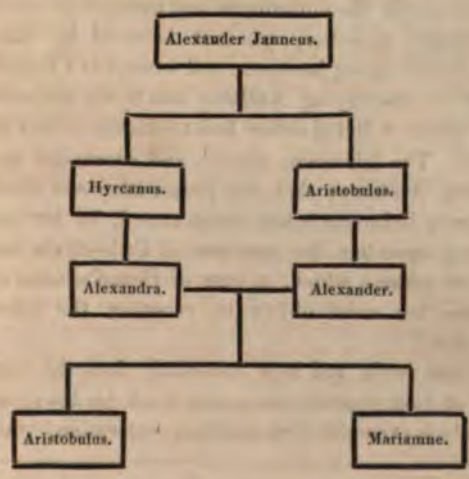
Having succeeded to this extent, and conceiving that her

* "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sate down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song, and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing Jehovah's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Ps. cxxxvii. 1—6.

† Prid. ii. 648. ‡ See. p. 423. § Prid. ii. 656.

son was as well entitled to the kingdom as to the high priesthood,* she renewed her application to Cleopatra, to use her influence with Anthony for that purpose; which Herod suspecting, confined her to the palace and set spies upon her conduct. Full of resentment for this restraint, she availed herself of an invitation she had received from Cleopatra, to fly with her son into Egypt, and had provided a ship at the seaside for that purpose; when Herod, who had been regularly apprized of all her motions, caused them both to be apprehended; but fearing the influence and resentment

* By her he was grandson to Hyrcanus, and by Alexander, his father, he was grandson to Aristobulus; and, therefore, had the interest and right of both those brothers centering in him. By his descent from the latter, he had the high priesthood, (that going in the male line); but, by his descent from both, he claimed the crown, thus.—



Prid. ii. 656.

of Cleopatra pardoned them, through an affectation of clemency.*

An occurrence, however, soon took place which shewed what secret malice lurked in the heart of the Idumæan tyrant, for Aristobulus having officiated as high priest at the feast of tabernacles, the beauty and gracefulness of his person was so set off by the splendour of the pontifical robes, and the favour he was daily acquiring with the people, became so evident, as to excite the envy and fury of Herod beyond restraint. Having, therefore, prepared an entertainment at Jericho a few days after, he took Aristobulus with him, and as the attendants of Herod were bathing after dinner in a fish pond, this interesting youth was prevailed upon to join the party; but had no sooner entered the water than his companions, who had been previously instructed, by repeatedly plunging him under water, as though in sport, effectually drowned him; the hypocritical tyrant shedding tears, and making bitter lamentations for the unfortunate and melancholy accident.†

Alexandra, however, was not deceived by this pitiful farce, for still urging her cause and wrongs to Cleopatra, that princess accompanying Anthony into Syria, prevailed upon him to summon Herod before him to answer for his atrocious conduct. The Idumæan obeyed, and succeeded so well in mollifying Anthony, that the prosecution was abandoned; Cleopatra's influence being counteracted, by her paramour bestowing upon her the province of Cœle-Syria instead of Judea, to possess which, in case of Herod's being deposed, had been her chief object in adopting the interests of Alexandra.‡

But how justly and how constantly does the retributive justice of God overtake those who break his laws; and how constantly is exemplified that solemn declaration, "there is no

* Prid. ii. 657. † Prid. ii. 658. ‡ Prid. ii. 660.

peace, saith my God, to the wicked."* Herod had been secretly informed that, notwithstanding his apparent devotedness to Cleopatra, Anthony had conceived a violent passion for Mariamne upon the mere fame of her beauty and accomplishments; and, therefore, previous to his repairing to him, he had given express orders to his uncle Joseph, in whose hands he had left the management of the government, that if Anthony should put him to death, he was immediately to kill this favourite wife, lest she should fall into the hands of the Roman General. Joseph with more zeal than wit, from an anxious desire to impress the queen with the ardour of his nephew's love for her, as a proof of it informed her of the orders entrusted to him; and, therefore, a rumour having arrived at Judea that Anthony had actually put Herod to death, Mariamne, having no Brahminical blood in her, by the advice of her mother Alexandra, took her flight and placed herself under the protection of one of the Roman legions; which then lay encamped without the walls of Jerusalem. Herod, however, soon returned, and being informed of what had happened by his sister Salome, who also insinuated that there was an improper familiarity between Mariamne and her uncle Joseph, he at first conceived the most violent jealousy; but having, upon reflection, inquired of Mariamne herself, he repented of his suspicions. Upon his making the most earnest declarations of affection to her, she incautiously reproached him with his cruel intention of putting her to death, upon which, flinging himself from her arms in a transport of rage, and immediately conceiving the idea that his uncle would never have betrayed his confidential communication respecting her, unless some improper intercourse had taken place between them, he drew his dagger; but his love returning, he vented his wrath upon his unfortunate uncle, whom he immediately slew without

* Is. xlviii. 22. lvii. 21.

even informing him why, and upon Alexandra, whom he closely confined in chains.*

Cleopatra still soliciting her depraved paramour for grants of fresh provinces, in order to pacify her, and at the same time to gratify her avarice, he took away from Herod the territory of Jericho, and the gardens where the famous balsam† grew, and bestowed them upon his lascivious mistress.‡

The same infamous woman having accompanied Anthony on his march into Armenia, as far as the river Euphrates, on her return by the way of Apamea and Damascus, came to Jerusalem, and was magnificently entertained by Herod. Her conduct, however, was so gross, and Herod was so incensed against her for her intrigues with Alexandra, that the fear of Anthony's resentment would hardly have restrained him from putting her to death, if he had not been diverted from it by the earnest entreaties of his friends. By their advice, however, he kept up the appearances of civility towards her, and accompanied her in person on her departure as far as the borders of her kingdom.§

Tormented with those secret pangs which never fail to

* Prid. ii. 662.

† This balsam was considered the most precious of unguents. Prid. ii. 510.; where see a long account of the plant which produces it; and some account of it, and of the curious vegetable production called a Jerusalem rose, or the rose of Jericho, may also be seen in Brown's Vulgar Errors.—One of the above, however, has been seen by the editor in the possession of the late venerable and truly estimable prebendary Jacob, of Salisbury, said by him to be more than two hundred years old; and which, although apparently in a state of absolute aridity, upon having its root placed in a glass of water, in about ten minutes expanded its fibres, and threw out several flowers of a brown and arid appearance, but perfectly formed, and in shape much like the florets of the lilac.

‡ Prid. ii. 662. § Prid. ii. 663.

haunt the consciences of the perpetrators of murder and rapine, and thinking it by no means improbable that the equally wicked Cleopatra might harbour resentment against him;* and aware of the tumultuous temper of the Jews, and their aversion to him, he fortified the strong castle of Massada, and furnished it with arms for ten thousand men, as a place of refuge in case of necessity.†

On the breaking out of the war between Mark Anthony and Octavius Cæsar, Herod took part with the former; and having by his directions marched an army against Malchus, king of Arabia Petræa, he was at first successful; but in a second battle, Athenion, a lieutenant of Cleopatra, having, out of hatred to Herod, joined his forces to those of the Arabian monarch, the Idumæan was defeated with great slaughter, himself hardly escaping with a very small remnant of his army.‡

Soon after this, a dreadful earthquake took place in Judea, which destroyed thirty thousand of the inhabitants, and which, in addition to his late defeat, induced Herod to sue to Malchus for peace; but the Arabian anticipating the injury which Herod had sustained to be greater than it actually was, rejected his offer. Herod, therefore, having collected together a fresh army, marched over Jordan, and defeating the Arabians in two successive battles, in which he slew twelve thousand men, he compelled them to sue for peace in their turn, and which ended the war between them.§

* It is said she made overtures to him whilst at Jerusalem too unequivocal to be mistaken, and if not accepted, we cannot impute it to a virtuous principle in such a man as Herod, but apprehension of Anthony, or perhaps disgust; and Herod was too well aware of the malice and revenge excited in a woman's breast by a refusal of her offers, not to apprehend the utmost extent of her resentment. Prid. ii. 663.

† Prid. ii. 603. ‡ Prid. ii. 670. § Prid. ii. 671. See note p. 429.

After the battle of Actium, Herod was disposed to adhere to the wreck of Anthony's fortune, and sent him advice into Egypt, that the best way to restore his fallen fortunes would be to kill Cleopatra, seize upon her kingdom and treasures, and therewith raise a fresh army; promising him in that case to render him all the assistance in his power. Finding, however, that Anthony had again submitted to the influence of that vicious princess, and, therefore, rightly concluding that his cause was now become absolutely hopeless, he considered how he could best make his court with Octavianus. The aged Hyrcanus, however, being still alive, who was the last male descendant of the Asmoneans, and had formerly occupied the throne and priesthood of Judea, the Idumæan tyrant, under pretence of a fictitious correspondence between Hyrcanus and Malchus, caused his aged and infirm benefactor* to be put to death.†

Still restless, however, and conscience-struck, he confined his wife Mariamne and her mother Alexandra, in the castle of Alexandrium, under the care of two of his confidants, Joseph and Sohemus, and sent his own mother and sister to Massada, the strongest fortress in Judea. After this, entrusting the government to his brother Pheroras, and directing him, in case he should not succeed, to assume the vacant throne himself, he set out to meet Octavianus, who was then at Rhodes; and having obtained an audience, and laying aside his diadem, he freely owned all that he had done for Anthony, and what further he was ready to have done for his interest, both by his counsel and assistance, would he have accepted of them. This, he said, he thought himself obliged to by the friendship that was between them; and, would he be pleased to think the like friendship worthy of his acceptance, he should, now he saw Anthony was wholly lost,

* See p. 426. † Prid. ii. 676.

be ready with the same fidelity to serve him. This frank declaration pleased the Roman, who no doubt was politic enough to see that it was his interest to conciliate as many of the tributary princes as possible. He therefore ordered Herod to resume his diadem, confirmed him in the throne of Judea, and held him in high favour throughout his reign.*

But the satisfaction which Herod derived from this expedition, was not a little allayed by the reception which he met with from Mariamne on his return. For the tyrant, notwithstanding the unfortunate result of his former† cruel policy, had, before he set out to meet Octavianus, left positive instructions with Sohemus, in case he should himself be cut off, to put both his queen and her mother to death; as well to prevent any other from possessing Mariamne, as to secure the kingdom to his brother, in exclusion of the Asmonean family. Sohemus, like the unfortunate Joseph, had betrayed the secret, which it was natural enough for Mariamne to suspect, and easy enough to extract, and it created in her mind so thorough a hatred and disgust towards her husband, that she did not attempt to conceal it;‡ not, however, discovering to him how she had obtained her information.§

Octavianus having arrived at Ptolemais in his way to invade Egypt, Herod waited on him there, and entertained him and all his army with great magnificence; presenting the Roman with eight hundred talents, and by his liberality ingratiating himself with the whole army.‖

As soon as Herod heard of the deaths of Anthony and Cleopatra, he hastened to Egypt to congratulate Octavianus, and was received with great kindness. And having on his return accompanied the Roman as far as Antioch, he was

* Prid. ii. 677. † See p. 441.
‡ Prid. ii. 678. § Prid. ii. 689.
‖ Prid. ii. 679.

rewarded by the restoration of Jericho and the balsam gardens, besides the additional territories of Gadara, Hippou, and Samaria, and the seaports of Gaza, Anthedon, Joppa, and Straton's tower.*

Mariamne still retained her resentment for Herod's cruelty to her family, and murderous intentions towards herself. Him she upbraided with the murder of her father, her grandfather, and her brother; and his mother Cyprus and his sister Salome she taunted with the meanness of their birth. On Herod's return from his last visit to Octavianus, he found her aversion increased rather than diminished, and endured it under various conflicts of mind for more than a year; sometimes being tempted to punish her, and at others softened by the strength of his attachment to her. Upon one occasion, when she had discovered her angry feelings in no very measured terms, his sister Salome took advantage of it to send his butler to him, with an accusation that Mariamne had offered him a bribe to administer a cup of poison to him. Herod immediately ordered her favourite eunuch to be put to the rack, who confessed that the cause of Mariamne's aversion to Herod was something that Sohemus had told her. The tyrant immediately adopted a suspicion, similar to that which he had entertained respecting her uncle Joseph; viz.—that Sohemus would never have disclosed his secret, unless some improper familiarity existed between him and Mariamne; and therefore ordered him to be put to death instantly. *He* also selected some of his own creatures for the trial of Mariamne, who passed a sentence of death upon her. It would seem that neither they nor Herod intended that sentence should be executed, but merely that the queen should be confined to one of his castles; but his mother and sister so inflamed and excited his anger, jealousy, and apprehensions,

* Prid. ii. 687.

that Herod ordered her to be executed. Mariamne underwent her sentence with great calmness and fortitude, although the disgraceful conduct of her own mother* was sufficient to have disturbed the tranquillity of a woman of less magnanimity.

As for the tyrant himself, he soon felt all the bitterness of remorse, and the image of his murdered wife was ever present to his imagination. These horrid reflections he attempted to stifle by wine and debauchery, but all in vain; for he became at last in an absolute phrensy, raving out for Mariamne night and day.†

In this state of alienation of mind, it pleased God, as a just judgment for the horrible wickedness of the land and the rulers thereof, to visit both small and great with a grievous pestilence; upon which Herod, as it were giving up all for lost, retired to Samaria, where he fell into a great sickness which had nearly cost him his life.‡

Notwithstanding the dreadful examples which Alexandra had so repeatedly had before her eyes, anticipating that Herod's sickness would end in his death, she began to intrigue, in favour of the sons of Herod by Mariamne, with the governors of some of the castles; but having been betrayed by them to Herod, he gave orders for putting her immediately to death, which was accordingly done.§

Salome had married Costobarus for her second husband, to whom Herod had formerly consigned the sons of Babas, for

* Fearing that her turn might come next, in order to save her life, as her daughter was led to execution, Alexandra accosted her with bitter railings, accusing her of being wicked and ungrateful towards a kind and affectionate husband, and telling her that she had what she deserved; and all this she expressed with such a seeming emotion of spirit, as if she would fly in her face all the way as she went. Prid. ii. 691.

† Prid. ii. 692. ‡ Prid. ii. 692. § Prid. ii. 693.

the purpose of putting them privately to death, but whom he had secretly preserved.* Salome, quarrelling with her husband, sent him a bill of divorce, contrary to the Jewish law, but backed by the authority of Herod; in order to ingratiate herself with whom, she discovered where her husband had concealed and preserved the sons of Babas; upon which Herod sent and not only slew them, but also Costobarus, Lysimachus, Antipater, Dositheus, and several others whom Salome accused of having entered into a conspiracy against him.†

Hitherto Herod had paid an outward respect to the Jewish polity; but having now cut off the heads of all the Asmonean family, he imagined he might venture by degrees to deviate from the national usages, and introduce practices more conformable to the Roman and other pagan nations. He, therefore, built at Jerusalem a theatre and amphitheatre, and in honour of Augustus, the name which had now been conferred upon Octavianus by the senate, celebrated games and exhibited shows in them, which gave great offence to the Jews.‡

Some of these innovations excited such resentment, that a

and in honour of Augustus gave it the name of Sebaste.* He also garrisoned Straton's tower, and called it Cæsarea, likewise in honour of Cæsar Augustus, together with Gabala and other fortresses.†

In the thirteenth year of the reign of Herod, a dreadful famine visited Judea, and so great was the distress that Herod melted down all his family and private plate, in order to purchase corn from Egypt; and the flocks having perished through a long drought which preceded and induced the famine, he procured great quantities of foreign wool, against the approach of the cold season; and by these acts of foresight and generosity, in some measure recovered the goodwill of the inhabitants.‡

In the fourteenth year of his reign, Herod erected a magnificent palace on the top of mount Sion, which was so large as almost to rival the temple itself; and was famous for two large and sumptuous rooms, one of which he called Cæsareum, in honour of Augustus Cæsar, and the other Agrippeum, in honour of Agrippa, the principal favourite of Augustus. And the Roman emperor having sent Œlius Gallus on an expedition against the southern Arabs, Herod supplied that general with five hundred men out of his own guards to accompany him.§

Having fallen in love with a daughter of Simon, one of the priests of Jerusalem, whose name also was Mariamne, he deposed Jesus, the son of Phebes, who was then high priest, and invested Simon with that sacred office, in order that his

* Or the city of Augustus. This place he planted with six thousand inhabitants invited thither from all parts, and divided among them the country about it, which being of a very fertile soil, as soon as it was cultivated, brought forth such plenty, as in a short time rendered the place rich and populous, and made it fully answer all the purposes for which he intended it. Prid. ii. 697.

† Prid. ii. 697. ‡ Prid. ii. 699. § Prid. ii. 701.

daughter might be a more suitable match for him, and then married her. And soon afterwards he built another stately palace, on the summit of a hill about seven miles from Jerusalem, and which he called Herodium, which soon became the centre of a considerable town.*

Herod having sent his two sons by his first wife, Mariamne, viz. Alexander and Aristobulus, to Rome for their education, placed them under the care of his friend Pollio; but Augustus taking them under his own patronage, assigned them apartments in his palace, and gave Herod full power to leave the succession of his territories to whichever son he pleased.†

Zenodorus, who farmed Trachonitis, Auranitis, and Batanea, of Varro, the then president of Syria, had formed a disgraceful connexion with various bands of robbers who dwelt in the caves and fastnesses of the mountains, and which occasioned so much mischief to the inhabitants, that Augustus placed all the provinces under the government of Herod, with the title of tetrarch. Herod soon routed out the robbers, but Zenodorus having lost as well his participation in their unjust gain as his tetrarchy, went to Rome to complain against Herod, but met with no encouragement. On his return he excited the Gadarenes to raise disturbances, who thereupon applied to Agrippa, who then governed for Augustus in the east, and resided at Mitylene, in the isle of Lesbos. Arriving, however, just after Herod had paid the Roman governor a complimentary visit, Agrippa not only paid no attention to their complaints, but putting the ambassadors in chains, sent them bound to Herod, who, through clemency and policy, dismissed them without punishment.‡

* Prid. ii. 704.

† At the same time he added to his former dominions Trachonitis, Auranitis, and Batanea, from whence Herod had expelled some formidable bands of banditti. Prid. ii. 705.

‡ Prid. ii. 707.

Augustus himself having visited Syria the ensuing year, when he arrived at Antioch, found Zenodorus with the Gadarenes, who were come to renew their complaints against Herod, charging him with tyranny, violence, and rapine, and sacrilege in plundering and violating temples. They succeeded so far as that Augustus sent for Herod to make his defence; in which the former exhibited so much leniency towards the latter, that his accusers destroyed themselves during the night; Zenodorus taking poison, and the Gadarenes either cutting their own throats, or casting themselves down from the rocks into the sea.* Augustus conceiving from these occurrences that the accusations were false, and to make Herod amends for the trouble and anxiety they had occasioned him, invested him with the tetrarchy of the provinces formerly under Zenodorus; and for greater honour joined him in the commission with the president of Syria, ordaining that nothing should be done without his knowledge and advice. Besides which, having given Pheroras, a brother of Herod's, an independent tetrarchy, Herod erected a sumptuous temple to his honour, near the mountain Paneas, at the foot of which Jordan takes its rise, of beautiful white marble; by which idolatrous flattery, and his other compliances with the pagan rites, he still further alienated the regards of all such Jews as had any respect for the purity of their religion.†

When Augustus retired out of Syria, Herod attended him to the sea shore; but upon his return to Jerusalem, he found that many of his subjects were deeply offended by his culpable compliances with the idolatrous practices of the Greeks and Romans; and although he pleaded the doctrine of expediency, as eloquently as the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, he found it impossible to restrain the discontents of the people,

* It is more than probable Herod caused them to be assassinated.

† Prid. ii. 709.

except, like the above political tergiversators, by prohibiting all meetings at feasts and clubs, and all numerous assemblies, and planting his spies in all directions. And so low did the jealous tyrant condescend to stoop, that he often went out himself in disguise, and acted the police officer in his own defence. As a measure of security, he attempted to impose an oath of fidelity on all his subjects; but Hillel and Shammai, and their partisans amongst the Pharisees, and all the Essenes, positively refusing to take it, he was compelled to abandon his object.*

In the nineteenth year of his reign, Herod having finished his buildings at Sebaste, and nearly completed those at Cæsarea, formed the design of rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem, which had been erected by Ezra, and had received much damage in the various wars which had taken place since its erection.† But the Jews were so jealous of the tyrant's real intentions, that he did not venture to take down the old temple, till he had actually collected all the materials necessary for the construction of a new one, which occupied two whole years, employing for that purpose one thousand waggons, ten thousand artificers, and one thousand priests, skilful in the appropriate architecture.‡

The materials having been collected, Herod took down the Nehemiahan temple to the very foundations, and began the

* Prid. ii. 711.

† The temple built after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity fell much short of that of Solomon's in the height, magnificence, and other particulars; and five hundred years having elapsed since its erection, several decays had happened to it, both by the length of time and also by the violence of enemies. For the temple, by reason of its situation, being the strongest part of Jerusalem, whenever the inhabitants were pressed by war, they always made their last refuge thither; and whenever they did so, some of its building suffered by it. Prid. ii. 713.

‡ Prid. ii. 713.

new erection, just forty-six years before the first passover of our blessed Lord's personal ministry.*

Herod wishing to pay his respects to Augustus, at Rome, and to see his own sons whom he had sent there for education,† set sail for Italy, and passing through Greece, was present at the one hundred and ninety-first Olympiad,‡ wherein he presided. Perceiving that the shows had sunk much in point of magnificence, through the poverty of the Œlians, he settled a constant revenue for their support; and he was in consequence nominated a president for life.§

Augustus received him with great hospitality and regard, and Herod finding the education of his sons completed, took them back with him into Judea, where he soon after married Alexander to Glaphyra, the daughter of Archelaus, king of Cappadocia, and Aristobulus to Berenice, the daughter of Salome, his own sister. These young men soon became great favourites with the Jews, and consequently excited the suspicion and malice of old Salome, although one of them had married her own daughter.‖

In about a year and a half, the holy of holies and the more sacred parts of the new temple were ready for the performance of public worship.¶

* Prid. ii. 714. John, ii. 20.

† See p. 452.

‡ The Grecian mode of reckoning time: an Olympiad being a circle of four years. This way of reckoning was brought in by Iphitus, taking its rise from the Olympic games, which were instituted by Pelops, and celebrated every fifth year, for five days together, in the plains of Elis, near the city of Olympia, in honour of Jupiter Olympus, by five kinds of exercises, viz.—leaping, running, wrestling, quoiting, and whorl-bats. The first Olympiad began A. M. 3174. By presiding at these games, Herod branded himself as a favourer of idolatry and an apostate from Jehovah.

§ Prid. ii. 715.

‖ Prid. ii. 715. ¶ Prid. ii. 716.

Agrippa* having arrived in Proper Asia, Herod went thither to invite him to come into Judea, whither Herod accompanied him, and entertained him and his attendants with great magnificence; and having taken him a tour to Sebaste, Cæsarea, Alexandrium, Herodium, Hyrcania, and his other new built cities and castles, finally conducted him to Jerusalem. On approaching that quondam habitation of holiness, he was met at some distance by all the people in their festival apparel, and conducted into the city in a solemn procession and with loud acclamations. Whilst there, he offered an entire hecatomb of oxen in the temple, and feasted all the people, and soon after sailed back again into Ionia.†

Agrippa having involved himself in a war with the inhabitants of the Cimmerian‡ Bosphorus, and being in some difficulties for want of supplies and military stores, Herod hastened to his assistance with a fleet and army, and arriving at Sinope in Pontus at a very critical juncture, established himself in the favour of the Roman commander. Agrippa

Ionia, whither Herod accompanied him; and during the journey, obtained from him many favours in behalf of several of the inhabitants of the countries through which he passed, who made use of his mediation. Amongst others, on his arrival in Ionia, the descendants of the Babylonish Jews whom Antiochus the Great had planted in Phrygia, Lydia, and other provinces, and who had spread themselves throughout Lesser Asia and the Isles, had been much distressed, and were then suffering from the oppressions, first of the Syrians, and afterwards of the Romans. These having applied to Herod, he so effectually interceded with Agrippa, that he procured a redress of their grievances, and a restoration of all their privileges, and especially the liberty of exercising and enjoying their own religion.*

Upon his return to Jerusalem, Herod assembled the people and related to them his successes, and the relief he had obtained for the Jews of Lesser Asia, and then remitted to them one quarter of their taxes, and thus obtained great popularity.†

Herod, however, was not doomed to experience tranquillity long together, for his sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, had not lived at home with their father more than three years, when they fell under his displeasure, in consequence of occasionally expressing resentment at their mother's death, and throwing out threats against the authors of it. Salome and Pheroras were well aware against whom those threats were pointed, and therefore began immediately to lay plots for the ruin of the young princes. Opportunities were easily supplied by such designing characters to excite and inflame the incautious youths, and all their rash expressions were regularly conveyed to Herod, and we may be certain not without some embellishments. The tyrant soon took the alarm, and amongst

* Prid. ii. 717. Crevier, i. 137. † Prid. ii. 718.

other steps to curb them, he brought Antipater,* another of his sons, to court, with the avowed purpose of supplanting them both; a remedy one would have thought likely to inflame the disease, and so it actually turned out; for Antipater who was a malicious man, readily assisted to widen the breach between his father and brothers for his own advantage.†

In this he succeeded so well, that when Agrippa was about to quit the province and return to Rome, Herod introduced Antipater to him, and sent him with him to Rome, where he soon obtained the favour of Augustus, but still carried on his secret machinations against his brothers, under a pretended apprehension for his father's safety.‡

The jealousies and suspicions between Herod and his two eldest sons, became at length so much inflamed by those whose interest it was to prevent a reconciliation, that he took them with him to Aquileia, in Italy, for the express purpose of accusing them before Augustus. Having charged them with disobedience and disrespect, and a design to poison him, but failing in his proof, Augustus acquitted them, and succeeded in reconciling them to their father, and they returned home together apparently reconciled. But Herod must most probably have retained a lurking malice in his heart; for on his return to Jerusalem, having assembled the people in the temple, he related to them the result of his journey, but named Antipater to succeed him, and the sons of Mariamne in succession.§

During his absence, the thieves of Trachonitis and the other provinces, took that opportunity to revolt, and return to their

* He was Herod's eldest son by Doris, his first wife; but she being divorced on his marriage with Mariamne, her son was bred up in private till he was brought to court on this occasion; and when fixed there, he soon brought his mother thither also. Prid. ii. 735.

† Prid. ii. 736. ‡ Prid. ii. 736.

§ Prid. ii. 737.

former depredations, but being soon reduced, forty of the ringleaders fled into Arabia Petræa, where Sylleus, the minister of Obadas, out of hatred to Herod,* not only received them under his protection, but gave them a fortress as a place of refuge and rendezvous.†

Cæsarea‡ being now completed, Herod built several other cities, viz.—Antipatris, named after his father; Cypron, after his mother; and Phasaelis, after his eldest brother; from which last he also named a large tower, which he built at Jerusalem, as large as that of Pharos at Alexandria.§

The Jews of Asia and Cyrene, being much oppressed by the heathen inhabitants, and restrained in the exercise of their own religion and laws, obtained redress by making application to Augustus.‖

The combined malice of Salome, Pheroras, and Antipater, at length so thoroughly excited Herod against the sons of Mariamne, that he had no peace nor rest night or day, and having put all their confidants to the rack, some of the confessions, probably invented through apprehension, induced him to confine Alexander in chains. The young prince, driven to desperation, sent four papers to his father, confessing to various plots, but alleging that Salome and Pheroras, together with Ptolemy and Sapinnius his two prime ministers,

* The reason of this hatred to Herod was, Sylleus would have married Salome, Herod's sister, and he had gained her consent thereto; Herod requiring that he should first turn Jew, and Sylleus not daring so to do, for fear, as he said, lest the Arabians should stone him to death on his return. This broke off the match, and Herod forced Salome to marry Alexas, a confidant of his; at which Sylleus contracting a great hatred against Herod, expressed it on all occasions, till at length, in the pursuit of it, he procured his own ruin. Prid. ii. 740.

† Prid. ii. 741.

‡ Or Straton's tower. See page 451.

§ Prid. ii. 737. ‖ Prid. ii. 731.

were concerned in them. Herod, naturally suspicious, believed the whole to be true, raged like a madman, and putting many to the rack, tortured them to death, and converted the royal palace into one vast human slaughterhouse.*

From this dreadful state he was for a season relieved by the arrival and judicious conduct of Archelaus, whose daughter Alexander had married;† for at first affecting to unite with Herod in all his violence against his son-in-law, and threatening to take his daughter home again, the violence of the tyrant subsided, and he became a supplicator with Archelaus to forgive Alexander. Availing himself of this return to reason and reflection, Archelaus examined carefully into all the matters alleged against the young prince, and by his good sense and wise conduct reconciled the father and sons to each other. And so sensible was Herod of the service which had been rendered to him, that he accompanied Archelaus as far as Antioch, besides making him many valuable presents, and in his turn reconciling him to Titus Vespasian, the Roman governor of Syria.‡

Herod having made heavy complaints to Augustus against

death all their kindred; which so far from producing the desired result, exasperated them so much the more, and ended in their renewing their inroads, and damaging the country more than ever.*

The temple being finished at the expiration of nine years and a half, Herod celebrated the dedication of it with great pomp, on the anniversary of his own accession to the crown.†

The tributary sovereigns dependant on Rome, were not considered at liberty to make war upon each other, without obtaining the concurrence of the senate, or the chief officer who represented them in the different provinces, or we cannot imagine but that Herod had sufficient strength to have eradicated the banditti of Repta. Their incursions, however, becoming daily more distressing, he at length applied to Saturnius and Volumnius the Roman governors of Syria, complaining against Sylleus for protecting them, at the same time impleading him for a debt of sixty talents. Sylleus appeared before the proconsuls at Berytus, and was condemned, and engaged by oath to pay the debt, and give up all the fugitives, within thirty days; but instead of performing his engagement, he went to Rome.‡

Herod having obtained permission from the proconsuls to obtain redress by force of arms, destroyed the fortress of Repta, and slew all that fell into his hands; and after defeating Nacebus, an Arabian officer, who came to their assistance, he placed three thousand Idumæans in Trachonitis, to protect the country from further depredations. Sylleus, however, being still at Rome, made such an exaggerated

* Prid. ii. 741.

† "And it was very proper and requisite that this house should be thus repaired and fitted up in its best dress, when he that was Lord thereof was coming to it." Prid. ii. 741. See an account of this erection in Jos. ii. 373. 378.

‡ Prid. ii. 742.

representation of the whole matter to Augustus, that he wrote Herod a very severe letter, and was for a considerable time estranged from him.*

Nor was this wretched tyrant ever doomed again to experience peace on his throne; for his jealousies having been again revived against his sons Alexander and Aristobulus, and the Trachonites having rallied and overpowered their Idumæan guards, renewed their depredations, which Herod was afraid to repress, lest he should exasperate Augustus still further. To remove this unfavourable impression, Herod had sent two embassies to Rome, without either of them being able to obtain an audience; but the Trachonites who had become acquainted with and been encouraged by that circumstance, having renewed their ravages to an alarming extent, Herod resolved to send Nicholas Damascenus to Rome, upon a third embassy.†

The real object of Sylleus in going to Rome was, that he might be absent whilst his master Obadas was poisoned by his directions, in the hope that Augustus would confer the dominions of the deceased monarch upon him. But the Nabathean‡ Arabs, over whom he reigned, immediately chose a king for themselves of the name of Aretas, and whom we shall often have occasion to mention.§ To counteract the machinations of Sylleus, the Nabatheans had also sent an embassy to Rome; and Nicholas, who found it was useless to attempt to gain an audience as the ambassador of Herod, very skilfully joined himself to the Nabathean embassy, and undertook to be their spokesman, in hopes he should be enabled to draw

* Prid. ii. 743. † Prid. ii. 746.

‡ The country where he reigned was Arabia Petræa, so called from Petra, the Metropolis; and the inhabitants being descended from Nebaloth, one of the sons of Ishmael, were from him named Nabatheans. Prid. ii. 743. See p. 169. Keith, 180—236.

§ Prid. ii. 743.

the attention of Augustus, to the merits of Herod's case incidentally. Augustus having appointed a day for hearing the accusations of the Nabatheans against Sylleus, Nicholas opened the case, and after dilating upon the crimes more immediately connected with the Nabatheans, he artfully alleged that Sylleus had committed a great affront and insult upon Augustus himself, relating Herod's invasion of Repta, and punishment of the thieves. Augustus instantly caught the alarm, and ordered Nicholas to confine himself to the proof of the last charge, who having completely established it, Sylleus, being present, and not daring to contradict him, the emperor condemned him upon the spot, and sent him back into Arabia in chains, with orders to pay Herod his debt. On his arrival there he refused to comply, upon which, at the instance of Antipater, he was sent for back again to Rome and there beheaded.*

Being thus restored to the favour of the great Roman, Herod might have enjoyed some days of peace, but the dissentions in his own family broke out afresh, for Antipater, Salome, and Pheroras continued to fill his mind with constant apprehensions and jealousies against his two eldest sons, till at length he applied to Augustus for permission to proceed against them capitally. The letters were full of violent and angry invectives, and therefore Augustus advised him to call a council at Berytus, and avail himself of the advice and assistance of the Roman governors of the neighbouring provinces, together with Archelaus, king of Cappadocia, and other eminent persons, and lay the whole matter before them. With this advice Herod complied, except as to Archelaus, who he thought would be partial to his son-in-law, Alexander; but when the council were met, Herod was so violent in his accusations, probably making use of intimida-

* Prid. ii. 744.

tion, that the young men were condemned, and Herod authorized to execute the sentence when and where he pleased. The ruthless tyrant lost no time in availing himself of this permission, for sending them both to Sebaste, he ordered them to be strangled; Salome being a principal instigator throughout.*

Having traced the history of this wonderful people through eleven hundred years, in which we have seen their selection,—superintendence,—expostulation,—punishment,—dispersion,—and, to all human appearance, absolute abandonment—by their divine protector, we are approaching the dawn of a brighter day;—a day which indeed opened with unrivalled splendour, and shone in meridian glory never to be eclipsed—a day in which a ray burst forth, which was to be the light of the Gentiles, but which, although it was also to be the glory of Israel, nevertheless, through their sins and final rejection, closed in a long and dreary, although, blessed be God, not an interminable night. Judging from all that is recorded of this people after the death of the Maccabees, their exploits savoured rather of national

who was to be the hope and saviour of Israel, the bright and morning star of their spiritual regeneration, and the salvation of the whole world.

Amongst other chosen vessels of mercy were a priest of the name of Zacharias, of the course of Abiah, and Elizabeth his wife, who was of the daughters of Aaron; and they were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of Jehovah blameless. And they had no child because that Elizabeth was barren; and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of Jehovah. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of Jehovah, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth; for he shall be great in the sight of Jehovah, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to Jehovah, their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for Jehovah.

And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answered and said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold thou

shalt be dumb, and not able to speak until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believedst not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out he could not speak unto them, and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them and remained speechless.*

Herod having now got rid of his two sons by Mariamne, imagined he had crushed the hydra of rebellion, but vainly; for Antipater having the way to the crown thus opened for him, could not wait for the death of his father, but conspired with his uncle Pheroras, whom Herod had offended,† and others, to destroy him by poison; and that both of them might be from home, and therefore the less liable to suspicion, Antipater procured himself to be called to Rome, and Pheroras, affecting obedience to the commands of Herod,‡ retired to his tetrarchy.§

* Luke, i. 6—20. It is impossible to avoid being forcibly struck

But Pheroras dying soon afterwards, and two of his freedmen complaining that he had been poisoned by his wife, Herod instituted a strict inquiry into all the circumstances, and in the course of the investigation, discovered the conspiracy against his own life, and how narrowly he had escaped the snare, and that Antipater was the chief conspirator.*

This unhappy individual returning into Judea without knowing the discoveries which his father had made, and being arrested immediately on his arrival, was tried and convicted before Quintilius Varus, the Roman governor, and the sentence being confirmed by Augustus, he was condemned to death.†

But the great work of redemption was now rapidly advancing, and Jehovah, with majestic dignity, and riding forth in his triumphal chariot, was proceeding to brush away all the cobwebs of humanity. As a due preparation for this great event, it was the will of the divine projector of this great plan that the universal world should be at peace, and which lasted during twelve years, for so long had the temple of Janus‡ been shut at Rome.

In the sixth month after the message had been delivered by the angel Gabriel to the wife of Zacharias, the same divine messenger was sent into a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, in order to announce to the Virgin Mary, the cousin of Elizabeth, and who was espoused to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, the great message of mercy and love of which he was the bearer. "Hail thou that art highly favoured, Jehovah is with thee: blessed art thou among women! And

* Prid. ii. 749.

† Prid. ii. 756. His execution was ordered by Herod, (who had permission given him by Augustus, either to execute or banish him), whilst he was himself in articulo mortis, and who also ordered him to be buried with ignominy in Hyrcania. Jos. iii. 28. 358.

‡ Prid. ii. 749.

when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the highest: and Jehovah God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold, the handmaid of Jehovah; be it unto me according to thy word."*

Nothing was more natural, than that a young and inexperienced female should take the earliest opportunity of communicating with some married female of her family, upon so extraordinary, and yet so interesting an occasion; and especially as it is very probable that she had heard of the miraculous dumbness of Zacharias, and the former communication of the angel Gabriel to Elizabeth. Mary, therefore, arose in those days, and went into a hill country with haste, in a city of Judah; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou

* Luke, i. 26—38.

among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from Jehovah.* And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.†

The pious language of these two daughters of Israel shews abundantly that amidst all the demoralizing influence of a vicious and profligate court, and a half pagan government, there were still some left who not only had not quite forgotten the institutions of Jehovah, but to whom the peculiar strain of the children of God was even familiar.

Zacharias still remained dumb, but when his wife was de-

* In the use of the word Jehovah, in the New Testament, I have followed the example of the Rev. Thos. Fry, the Rector of Emberton, Bucks, the learned editor of the Hebrew translation; the only edition of which that is to be depended upon, is the original one published in 1813, when Mr. Fry and the Rev. W. B. Collyer, were joint secretaries of the London Society for promoting Christianity amongst the Jews. See the Latin Preface, &c. to that edition.

† Luke, i. 39—55.

livered, and on the day appointed for the circumcision of the child, Elizabeth, remembering the words of the angel, would have him named John, whereas his kinsfolk and acquaintance wished him to be called after his father. Zacharias, however, upon being appealed to, had no sooner expressed his will by writing the name of John upon a tablet, and thus shewn his faith in the promise of God, than his tongue was loosed, and he praised God. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them; and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of Jehovah was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. And thou shalt be called the prophet of the highest: for thou shalt go before the face of Jehovah to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

* Luke, i. 65—79. See all difficulties upon this mysterious event, examined and refuted in Bell's Inquiry into the Incarnation.

The prophet Micah had long before declared* that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem, and in order that that prophecy might be accomplished, it pleased him to whom a thousand years are but as one day, that the Roman emperor should issue a proclamation for a cestus,† and taxation of the whole world, that is, of the whole Roman empire, and the provinces which were tributary to it. When the decree came into operation in Judea, it became necessary that Joseph and Mary, who then resided at Nazareth, should go up to Bethlehem, the city of David, of whose house and lineage they were. And here it was, and whilst sojourning there and lodging in a stable, because the concourse of strangers was so great that they could obtain no other accommodation, that the Divine Redeemer was born, and thus was that great and important event announced.

There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over the flock by night. And, lo, the angel of Jehovah came upon them, and the glory of Jehovah shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, let us now go even into Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which Jehovah hath made known to us. And

* Micah, v. 2.

† See the origin and particulars of this proceeding. Prid. ii. 750.

they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe* lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad this saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned glorifying, and praised God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.†

But this was not the only illustrious testimony with which it pleased God to honour the birth of his only begotten Son. For at his circumcision his parents having brought him to Jerusalem to present him in the temple, or to Jehovah, two holy persons of great age, whose lives had probably been spared for this especial purpose, distinctly recognised the infant Jesus as the promised Redeemer of his people; for behold there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the anointed of Jehovah. And he came by the spirit‡ into the temple; and when the parents brought

* See a critical note as to the year of our Lord's birth, in Prid. ii. 754.

† Luke, ii. 8—20. Crevier, i. 243

‡ To him, when cold decrepid age had spread
The snow of fourscore winters on his head,
As he one evening in the temple staid,
And for sad Israel's wish'd redemption pray'd,
A heavenly youth of those who waited there,
Indues a thin-spun robe of ambient air,
And bids the aged father *not* despair!
For though so short his thread of life were spun,
So many precious sands already run;
Him, vainly threat'ning, death could not surprise,
Till the Messiah bless'd his longing eyes!

in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary, his mother, behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God, with fastings and prayers, night and day. And she coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto Jehovah, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. And when they had performed all things according to the laws of

The same bright form appear'd this happy day,
As on his face in prayer he prostrate lay,
And from his closet beckon'd him away:
With joy the good old man the signal takes,
And, all ecstatic, to the temple makes.
In haste he cheerful came; erect, alone,
His useless crutches now aside were thrown:
Through all the crowd of priests and suppliants prest,
Then seized the child, and held him to his breast;
With his dear burden to the altar ran,
And thus, with sacred zeal inspir'd, began.

Rev. Sam. Wesley's Life of Christ.

Jehovah, they returned into Galilee, to their own city in Nazareth.*

We have seen how exceedingly jealous Herod was of any one approaching him as a successor, even in his own family; and we cannot imagine that he was ignorant of the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the Messiah, or of that universal expectation† which existed at the period of the birth of our Lord, that a child was about to be born in Judea, who was to obtain universal dominion.‡ Whether the preceding circum-

* Luke, ii. 25—39.

† Suetonius says "that an ancient and constant tradition had obtained throughout all the East, that in the fates it was decreed, that, about that time, some who should come from Judea, should obtain the dominion or government, i.e. of the world, which the Romans then possessed."—Suet. Vit. Vesp. 4. Tacitus also alleges "that many understood the great prodigies which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, as the forerunners of that extraordinary person, whom *the ancient books of the priests did foretel*, should come about that time from Judea, and obtain the dominion."—Hist. lib. v. c. 13. And the first mentioned author also informs us that the Sybil oracles, which were only a perverted, degenerate tradition of the Old Testament prophecies, had produced such an effect upon the whole senate of Rome, then in its full splendour and power, and also, as was supposed, in possession of all the *talent* and *intellect* of the then world, were so terrified, that in the very year in which Pompey took Rome, (see p. 418.) they issued a decree "that none born that year should be educated: and that those whose wives were with child, did each conceive great hopes, applying the prophecy to themselves."—Suet. Vit. Aug. 94. See Bp. Clayton's Second Letter, p. 148., my Edition of Leslie, p. 28. London, 1812., and Bp. Horsley's learned Dissertation on the Oracles of the Cumæan Sybil, prefixed to his volume of Nine Sermons, and many other authorities collected from heathen writers, in Doddridge's Sermons on the Evidences. Sermon viii. p. 226. and Dr. Gregory Sharpe's Concessions of Jews and Heathens, a very very valuable and scarce book.

‡ "Forty years before the birth of Christ, the Mantuan bard, as if inspired by the celestial muse of Isaiah, had celebrated with all the pomp of oriental metaphor, the return of the Virgin, the fall of the

stances, relative to the birth and conception of the Baptist and the Saviour, were made known to him or not, we have no information; but however that was, in either event we may easily judge with what jealous and sensitive apprehension the tyrant would hear that certain Magi, or wise men, had arrived at Jerusalem from the east, enquiring where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*

No wonder that Herod and all Jerusalem, such as it then was, were troubled at such news as this; and how melancholy must have been the state of a people, who were terrified and alarmed at the annunciation of the great event, which the mercy of God had provided for their deliverance! Herod, however, immediately assembled the priests and scribes of the people, and demanded of them where they expected that the Messiah was to be born? These persons did not then affect any ignorance upon the subject,—they did not allege that the time was not come, or that they did not expect any Messiah at all; but with one voice referred the Idumæan to the prophecy of Micah;† and which, from that circumstance,

serpent, the approaching birth of a godlike child, the offspring of the great Jupiter, who should expiate the guilt of human kind, and govern the peaceful universe with the virtues of his father; the rise and appearance of an heavenly race, and the gradual restoration of the innocence and felicity of the golden age. The poet was perhaps unconscious of the secret sense and object of these sublime predictions, which have been so unworthily applied to the infant son of a consul, or a triumvir!" Gibbon, iii. 270. Was Gibbon really an infidel? See Lowth, Prælect. xxi. 289. 293.

* Matt. ii. 2. The country of the Magians being in Persia, it is most likely they came from thence, and from those parts of it which lie about Bassora, that place lying directly east from Jerusalem. Prid. ii. 755.

† Matt. ii. 5. Micah, v. 2. As to which see Bp. Kidder, pt. i. ch. iii. Dr. Gill, 104—119. Bullock, 170. Harris, 509—535.

it is evident, was at that day well understood and universally acknowledged, to relate to the birth of the Messiah.

Such an intimation, however, was but little calculated to remove the fears of Herod; and, therefore, sending for the wise men to come to him privately, he enquired of them anxiously what time the star appeared, and sent them to Bethlehem, saying; Go, and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.*

The subsequent transactions shew what sort of homage the tyrant contemplated; but God having directed the re-appearance of the star till it conducted them to the spot where the child was, when they had come into the house, they saw the young child, with Mary, his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.†

God, however, aware of the intentions of Herod, warned the Magi not to return by the way of Jerusalem; and thus, whilst the tyrant was suspending his measures, in expectation of receiving from the Magi the information he was waiting for, an opportunity was afforded for an angel of Jehovah to appear to Joseph, and direct him to arise, and take the young child, and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and to remain there until he should be sent to him again.‡

But when Herod saw that he was mocked of the wise men, he was exceeding wroth, and sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of them. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying; In Rama

* Matt. ii. 8. † Matt. ii. 9, 10, 11. ‡ Matt ii. 12, 13.

was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachael weeping for her children and would not be comforted, because they are not.*

The period, however, was now approaching, when this unhappy wretch was to be summoned into the presence of that being whom he had so awfully offended; but so far from betraying any remorse for the crimes he had committed, his avowed purpose was, that his death should be celebrated by the most horrible and atrocious act that ever came into the mind of man.

Aware that he was lying under a loathsome and incurable disease,† and that the hatred which the Jews had for him would induce them rather to rejoice at than lament his death, he issued a proclamation, commanding all the principal Jews, on pain of death, to appear at Jericho, where he lay sick, on a given day. Upon their arrival he shut them all in the circus, and commanded his sister Salome, and Alexas, her

* Matt. ii. 16—18. Prideaux justly infers the probability of this relation, from the cruelty of the edict issued by Herod on his death-bed. Prid. ii. 757. See also Masson's Vindication of Macrobius, appended to the second volume of Bp. Chandler's Vindication of his Defence of Christianity, page 19.

† "He had a slow fever, not shewing itself so much to the outward touch and feeling, as more grievously burning him within. Moreover, he had a strong canine appetite for meat, which nothing could satisfy. His bowels were ulcerated, especially the colon gut, from whence he suffered grievous pains. His feet being swoln, from thence issued forth a phlegmatic and shining humour. Moreover, the disease had seized the lower part of his belly, an ulcer broke out in his genitals, breeding worms and lice; besides he had a shortness of breath, and that very stinking and unsavoury. And he had also a troublesome flux of rheum, and with it an asthmatic difficulty of breathing. And the patient not having strength to bear all this, there followed a convulsion of all the parts of his body." Prid. ii. 757.

husband, to let the soldiers in upon them and slay them the moment he was dead; alleging, that by this means, he should ensure the mourning of all the families of Judah in spite of themselves; and thus adjuring his sister and her husband with his dying breath to accomplish this detestable project, he expired in horrible pain and torment, smitten of God in a signal and grievous manner, for his many enormous iniquities.*

* Prid. ii. 756. Matt. ii. 19—23. Not long before his decease he attempted to stab himself.—Jos. iii. 27. "I cannot forbear here remarking that most of the great persecutors have died the like death, by being smitten of God in like manner in the secret parts. Thus died Antiochus Epiphanes; thus died Herod, the great persecutor of Christ and the infants at Bethlehem; thus died Galerius Maximianus, the author and great persecutor of the tenth and greatest persecution against the primitive Christians; and thus also died Philip II, king of Spain, as infamous for the cruelty of his persecutions, and the numbers destroyed by it, as either of the others." Prid. ii. 242—245. 757. where see the authorities collected. See also Watson's Life of Philip II. vol. iii. 333. But as all former persecutions were infinitely exceeded by the monstrosities of the Parisian massacre, perpetrated by Charles IX, his mother Catherine of Medicis, the Guises, and other popish princes and nobles, on the eve of St. Bartholemew, 1572; so not only the stings of conscience, but the visible inflictions of an offended and insulted God, were perhaps most conspicuous in the visitations of that inhuman monarch. "Charles fell mortally sick in the wood of Vincennes, the blood issuing from every aperture of his body; so that it was conjectured he had been poisoned. Whatever was the cause (if we may be permitted to judge of kings, who are amenable to the Almighty) it was a divine punishment for his blasphemies, and perhaps on account of the torrents of blood he had caused to be shed."—Perefixe. "His agonies were poignant in the extreme, and the blood oozed from all the pores of his flesh."—Sully. "Charles IX. expired in his blood at the castle of Vincennes, on the 30th of May 1574. His body was opened, but neither abscess nor gangrene was apparent; it was, however, full of wounds, the cause of which the surgeons could never ascertain.—Even the infidel Voltaire could not avoid

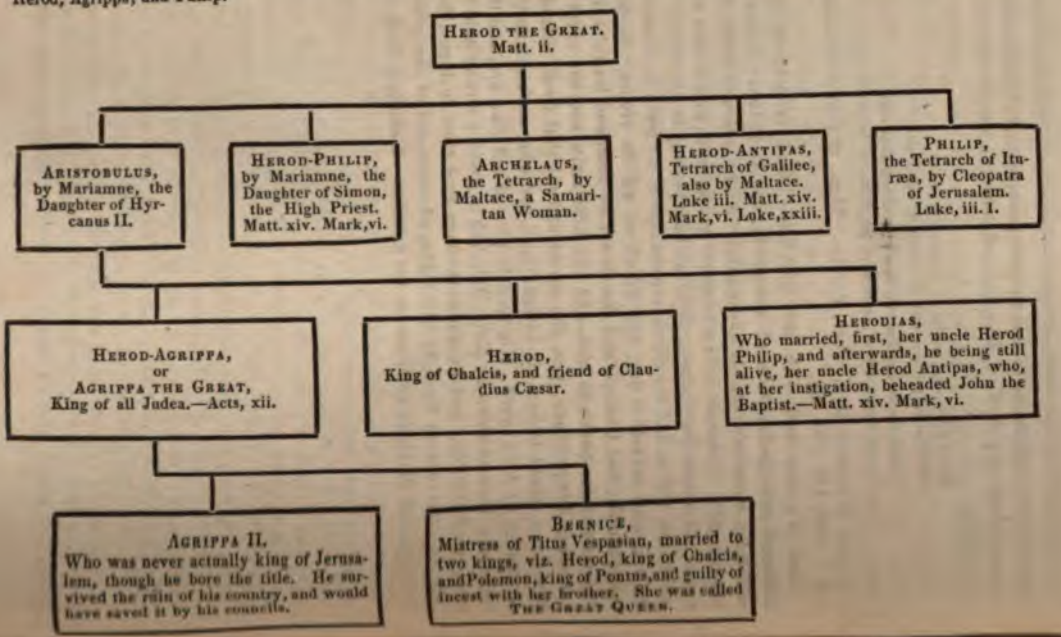
ascribing the visitation of this wretched sovereign, to the immediate appointment of that God, in whose existence he himself affected to disbelieve.

> Dieu déployant sur lui sa vengeance sévère,
> Marqua ce roi mourant, du sceau de sa colére.
>
> Omniscience against him displayed vengeance dire,
> For this monarch in death bore the stamp of his ire."

Parisian Massacre, by Comber, Passim. Mem. of Henry the Great, vol. i. 169, 170. 180. 182.

And we may add with the prophet—"God is jealous, and Jehovah revengeth; Jehovah revengeth, and is furious; Jehovah will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. Jehovah is slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked; Jehovah hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet; he rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers. Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him. Jehovah is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies. Nahum, i. 2—8.

* The Pedigree of the Idumæan family, so far as relates to the New Testament history, may be thus exhibited. Compare Prid. ii. 758. with Basnage, p. 27, &c.; and see Whiston's note, *post* p. 487. and Adam Clarke, on Matt. ii. 1. xiv. 1. Watson's Theo. Dic. sub vocis Herod, Agrippa, and Philip.



THE TETRARCHATE.

Upon the decease of this wretched man,* his extensive territories were divided amongst three of his sons; Archelaus, one of his sons by Malthace, being made tetrarch of Judea, Idumæa, and Samaria; Herod-Antipas, another of his sons by the same wife, tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa; and Philip, his son by Cleopatra of Jerusalem, tetrarch of Trachonitis, Paneas, and Batanea, or Ituræa.†

Joseph being warned by an angel in a dream, arose, and took the young child and his mother, and returned out of Egypt into the land of Israel; and there he, and Mary his wife, settled again at Nazareth, in Galilee, the place of their former habitation; and there Jesus grew up, and dwelt with them till the time that he entered on his public ministration.‡

A curious incident is mentioned by some of the Roman historians, of the contempt in which the religion of the Jews was held by that people;§ and which is so far material as sufficiently to account for the trifling mention which is made

* Bishop Clayton is of opinion that Jonathan Ben Uzziel, who was bred in the school of Hillel, composed his famous Targum during the reign of Herod the Great. Impartial Inquiry—Second Letter to an eminent Jew, p. 10.

† Crevier, i. 286. Prid. ii. 758.

‡ Prid. ii. 758.

§ According to the maxims of universal toleration, the Romans protected a superstition which they despised. Gibb. ii. 268. Quis est, Judices, qui hoc vere non laudare possit? exportari aurum non oportere, cum sæpe antea senatus, tum me consule, gravissime judicavit. Huic autem barbaræ superstitioni resistere, severitatis: multitudinem Judæorum, flagrantem nonnunquam in concionibus, pro republica contemnere, gravitatis summæ fuit. Cic. pro Flacco. cap. 28. Neither the violence of Antiochus, nor the arts of Herod, could ever persuade the Jews to associate with the institutions of Moses the elegant mythology of the Greeks!! Gibb. ii. 268.

of it by them, and of the errors which that trifle contains. Caius Cæsar, the grandson of Augustus, travelling through Judea, in his way from Egypt to Armenia, abstained from offering any sacrifice there, expressly intending thereby to shew his contempt for their religion; an action which Augustus himself is said to have highly approved;* an extraordinary exemplification of the enmity of the human heart against God, being one of a thousand instances to be seen in all ages, of wonderful liberality being extended to all sorts of errors and superstitions, whilst the most pointed malice is constantly exhibited towards vital godliness, and the religion of the true God.†

Archelaus acted with so much tyranny and cruelty, that after he had reigned about ten years, he was summoned to appear before Augustus, at Rome, to answer charges brought against him, as well by the Jews, as by the Samaritans; and, being found guilty, he was deposed from his principality, had all his goods condemned to be confiscated, and himself banished to Vienne, in France, situated on the Rhone.‡

And now it was that the great prophecy of Jacob, concerning the Messiah, was accomplished: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."§ And, accordingly, Jesus being now twelve years old, his parents went to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast of the passover. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried

* Prid. ii. 750.

† Ex gratiâ, Dr. Lushington, Sir James Scarlett, &c. are vastly liberal towards Socinians and Papists, but are fearfully bitter and venomous against Wesleyan methodists, and pious clergymen and dissenters. In truth, liberality is now a secret cover and cloak for infidelity.

‡ Prid. ii. 760. Crevier. i. 287.

§ Gen. xlix. 10. Kidder. Gill, 30. Harris, 97. Bishop Clayton's Second Letter, 83.

behind in Jerusalem, and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey, and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

And it came to pass, that after three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business.*

And thus also was fulfilled the prophecy of Haggai,† "The glory of the latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith Jehovah of Hosts;" for the Saviour having attained the age of twelve years, commenced his ministry by going up to Jerusalem, and disputing with the doctors in such a manner, as plainly indicated his divine character and mission.‡

And now it was, therefore, that the whole form of the Jewish civil polity was changed; for after deposing Archelaus, Augustus appointed Publius Sulpitius Quirinius, (or Cyrenius§), president of Syria, and sent him into the east, to take possession of the territories over which Archelaus had reigned, and reduce it into the form of a Roman province; and Coponius, a Roman of the equestrian order, was

* Luke, ii. 41—49.

† Hag. ii. 9. See Bp. Kidder. Dr. Gill, 41. Bullock, 177. Harris, 480.

‡ Luke, ii. 41—50.

§ Luke. ii.-2. P. Sulpicius Quirinius, who was consul in the year of Rome 740. Crevier, i. 203. He was a great favourite of Tiberius, who, on his death, decreed him the honour of a public funeral. Crevier, ii. 200.

appointed to the government under the title of procurator of Judea, under the president of Syria. And after this the power of life and death* was taken out of the hands of the Jews, and placed wholly in the Roman procurator: and the taxes were thenceforth paid immediately to the emperor of Rome.†

Amongst other alterations made by Quirinius on his arrival in Judea, he deposed Jaazar, the son of Boethus, from being high priest, and appointed Annas, the son of Seth, to succeed him in that office.‡

On the death of Augustus,§ the empire of Rome and her many provinces descended upon Tiberius, who was the son of the late emperor's wife, Livia, by a former husband; and he appointed Valerius Gratus to the province of Judea.‖

This procurator at first removed Annas from the office of high priest, and appointed Ismael, the son of Fabus, in his place; but the next year he deposed Ismael, and substituted Eleazar, the son of the same Annas. In less than a year he removed Eleazar, and appointed Simon, the son of Camith,

an attempt of Pilate to bring a current of water to Jerusalem, from a distance of two hundred furlongs.

The Jews, not being pleased with this undertaking, assembled in great multitudes, and shewed symptoms of tumult; upon which Pilate ordered his troops to mix themselves with the multitude, and conceal daggers under their habits; and thus falling upon the unarmed populace, a great slaughter was made of them.*

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying; The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.†

And Jesus coming from Galilee to John, by the river Jordan, to be baptized of him, John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.‡

At the first preaching of John the Baptist, Herod-Antipas,

* Jos. iii. 61. A. Clarke on Luke, xlii. 1.
† Luke, iii. 2—6. ‡ Matt. iii. 14—17.

and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah.*

It is no part of the object of this history to trace the course of our blessed Lord's ministry and miracles, which are much better recorded in the New Testament;† and, therefore, we shall hasten to the closing scene of his meritorious life, by the great transactions of Calvary.

Betrayed by one of his own disciples,‡ and arraigned before the Roman governor, the holy Jesus was first sent by him to Herod-Antipas, who was then at Jerusalem, as being a native of Galilee; and when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad, for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words, but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

* Luke, xiii. 31—35. A similar affectionate remonstrance and invitation to this stiffnecked but yet *ever loved, and to be beloved people*, is to be found in the evangelical prophet—"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea: Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me." Is. xlviii. 18, 19.

† See also Jeremy Taylor's Life of Christ, a scarce but valuable book.

‡ Luke, xxii. 47, 48.

And Herod, with his men of war, set him at nought and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.*

Whatever might be the other crimes of this governor, or whatever might be his opinion of the extraordinary character he was called upon to judge,† it is clear he was unwilling to imbrue his hands in the blood of the Saviour; for having called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, he said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people; and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him; no, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him, and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him and release him. And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas; Pilate, therefore, willing to release Jesus,‡ spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him; I will therefore chastise him and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave

* Luke, xxiii. 8—11. Pilate was procurator or præpositus of Judea, which was annexed to the province of Syria. Hence he had the power of punishing capitally, which the procurators did not usually possess. Suet. Vesp. 4. Tac. Ann. iv. 15. xii. 23. xv. 44.

† It is of great importance to bear in mind that, although the work now extant by the name of Acta Pilati is acknowledged to be spurious, there is no reasonable ground for doubting that there once were genuine writings bearing the same, or substantially the same, important testimony to the divine character, miracles, and innocent life of the Saviour. See the subject thoroughly examined in Lardner's Testimonies, i. 310—338.

‡ See Acts, iii. 13.

sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him, that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? And there were also two other malefactors led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear

God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we, indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off beholding these things.*

And behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor, and he was a good man and a just; (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them); he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews; who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.†

But the grave had no power to retain the body of our

* Luke, xxiii. 13—49. † Luke, xxiii. 50—56.

Divine Redeemer;* and, therefore, when upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them, they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments; and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen; remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, and returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James, and other women that were with them, who told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.†

And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and

* Amongst various publications on the resurrection of our divine Saviour, see the celebrated work of Mr. Gilbert West, London, 1754, Bp. Sherlock's Trial of the Witnesses, Bp. Wilson's excellent Note on Acts, x. 40, 41, and Bp. Horsley's Four Sermons upon the same subject.

† Luke, xxiv. 1—12.

went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad; and the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which have come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it would have been HE which should have redeemed Israel; beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not.

Then he said unto them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory! And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*

And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But

* See this interesting occurrence amplified and admirably illustrated, so as to introduce and apply all the Old Testament prophecies relating to our Lord, in an ancient black letter volume, penés me, translated from the German of Dr. Sylvanus Urban, under the title of Emmaus, by W. Hilton, scholiast, with a brief ingresse to the Christian reader, by John Foxe, the martyrologist. London, 1578.

they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

And it came to pass as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me.

Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission

of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.

And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.*

Whilst the sovereign disposer of events was thus prosecuting his gracious and magnificent plans,† for the redemption of a lost and ruined world, by instruments of low esteem; and without deigning, except in some very few instances, to notice the great and the noble, those mighty ones of the earth were carrying on their mundane affairs, and practising their political intrigues, and their profligate habits, utterly regardless of the proceedings of Jehovah. Yet they spoke sufficiently loud to have attracted their most serious attention, if, instead of being immersed in worldly pleasures and pursuits, they had been attentive to the voice of prophecy lodged in their hands; and if their religion, instead of being a holy and spiritual principle, had not sunk into a mere national and distinguishing system.

Pontius Pilate, besides many acts of cruelty,‡ had conducted himself with very little discretion towards the

* Luke, xxiv. 13—53.

† Amongst other previous dispositions for this sublime event, we may notice especially the remarkable influence of the over-ruling providence of God, in so far controlling the natural severity of the emperor Tiberius Cæsar, in whose reign our Lord's personal ministry was to be exercised, that he even proposed to the senate to enrol him amongst the Roman deities; and when they refused their concurrence, he nevertheless persisted in his opinion, and ordered that if any accused the Christians, they should be punished. Lardner's Test. i. 322.

‡ Abp. Leighton's Works, vol. iii. 520.

prejudices of the Jews; and it is even said, he contemplated the abolishing of the Jewish laws, and with that object removed the army from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, with the effigies or images on their ensigns. This being transacted in the night, when the people saw them in the morning, they became so clamorous, that finally Pilate consented to remove them.*

But having afterwards committed a cruel slaughter† upon the Samaritans, he was accused by the senate of that nation before Vitellius, who was then president of Syria; and who‡ deprived Pilate of his government, and sent him to Rome to answer to Tiberius; by whose successor he was sent an exile into Gaul, where he hanged himself;§ and a similar doom was also reserved for the traitor, Judas Iscariot.‖

Aristobulus, who had been so cruelly murdered by his father Herod,¶ had left three children, viz.—Agrippa, Herod,

* Jos. iii. 61—383. Crevier, ii. 22. iii. 22.

† See Israel, post.

afterwards king of Chalcis,* and Herodias. Agrippa was sent young to Rome, where he was educated; but having given offence to Tiberius, was thrown into prison. During his residence at Rome, he had formed an intimacy with Caius Caligula, and when that prince succeeded Tiberius in the imperial throne, he not only liberated Agrippa, but gave him two tetrarchies, viz.—those of his uncle Philip, and of Lysanias, and liberty to assume the title† of king.‡

Nor were Herod-Antipas, who ought to have protected, but who had so cruelly mocked and insulted the Saviour, and the profligate Herodias, suffered to escape the divine vengeance.§

Of the former we hear nothing more in the New Testament; but we learn from other authorities that he built the city of Tiberias, in Galilee, and Julias, in Perea beyond Jordan.‖

When his nephew Agrippa returned from Rome with the title of king, and invested with the two tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, Herodias urged him to take a voyage to Rome,

* He was the friend of Claudius Cæsar, from whom he obtained the privilege of nominating and deposing the high priest, and the superintendency of the temple of Jerusalem, although he was not the king of Judea.*

† But not the regal power of life and death, which the emperor still kept in his own hands.—Bas. 21. Besides many other marks of favour, in exchange for his iron fetters, Caligula gave him a golden chain, which, on his return to Jerusalem, Agrippa hung up in the temple, at the same time offering up sacrifices of thanksgivings to God. He however mixed with his observance of Jewish rites many pagan superstitions, which frequently exposed him to the suspicions and reproaches of the more conscientious Jews. Crevier, iii. 22. 158. 291.

‡ Basn. 20. Crevier, iii. 21. Jos. iii. 86. See p. 480. He was called Herod-Agrippa. A. Clarke on Matt. ii. 1. Watson sub voce Agrippa. Jos. iii. 156. where see a curious note by Whiston.

§ A. Clarke on Matt. ii. 1. and Watson's Theo. Dic.

‖ Jos. iii. 383.

* Bas. 27.

to obtain from Caligula a similar honour and authority. But whether Agrippa suspected his uncle intended to make any representations injurious to him, or was ambitious to obtain his tetrarchy also, he sent Fortunatus to accuse him to the emperor of a conspiracy with Sejanus, and Antobanus, king of Parthia. And Antipas, not being able to defend himself against the charge, or to repel the inferences drawn from some part of his conduct, was banished to Lyons, in France, together with Herodias, from whence they both retired into Spain and died in exile;* and upon that occasion, Caligula gave Agrippa his uncle's tetrarchy of Galilee.†

Towards the conclusion of the reign of Tiberius, all the Jews were banished from Rome, on account of four of them having attempted to convert Fulvia, a Roman lady of rank and wealth, to their faith; and it was imputed to them that their real object was to possess themselves of her money. Four thousand were sent to Sardinia to keep the banditti of that island in charge, and most probably perished there by the sword, or by the climate.‡

During the reign of Caligula, the Jews had a very narrow escape from extermination, throughout the extent of the Roman empire. The danger originated in the impious idolatry of the Romans, and the impiety of the emperor himself, not, however, peculiar to him, bad as he was, in allowing statues to be erected and divine honours to be paid to him. Many of the inhabitants in various provinces were bitterly inimical against this nation on various accounts, and had recourse to the same expedient as the Babylonian courtiers in the days of Daniel, viz.—to find an occasion against them concerning the law of their God.§ And therefore, availing themselves of the impiety and vanity of Caligula, by setting

* Bas. 14. † Bas. 20.
‡ Crevier, ii. 155. § Dan. vi. 5.

up his statues in the different cities where the Jews resided, they at the same time claimed merit for their own respect and attachment to the emperor, and drew down his resentment against the poor Jews, for not uniting with them in worshipping his statues. To their praise it is recorded they invariably refused to do so, and God in mercy appeared for their deliverance, by diverting the tyrant's wrath and madness.

The conspiracy began at Alexandria; but the chief danger was at Jerusalem itself, where Caligula had ordered a statue of Jupiter to be set up in the sanctuary itself, and commanded Petronius, the governor of Syria, to enforce obedience. To avert this impious desecration of their holy place, the entire population of Jerusalem, and the neighbouring towns and cities, men, women, and children, to the amount of many thousands, repaired to the Roman general at Ptolemais, and fell prostrate before him; and on his ordering them to rise, stood up, their hands behind their backs, their heads covered with dust, and tears streaming down their eyes, when one of their elders addressed him thus: "We are unarmed, as you see; without cause are we accused of being rebellious, even our hands we hold in such a posture as shews we yield up ourselves without resistance; we have brought our wives and children too, that you may save us all, or, if we must perish, that we may perish altogether. Petronius, we are pacific from inclination; and our religion breathes only peace. When Caius became emperor, we were the first in Syria that gave him joy on his happy accession: our temple was the first in which sacrifices were offered up for his prosperity; And shall it be the first whose religious rites are abolished? We abandon our towns, our houses, and our possessions; we are ready to lay at your feet all that we have; nor shall we think it too great a price to preserve the purity of our worship. Or, if we cannot obtain what we now beg, all that remains for us is to die, to avoid seeing a misfortune we dread more than

death. We are told, troops of horse and foot are marching against us, if we oppose the consecration of the statue. Slaves cannot be mad enough to oppose their master's will. We offer our breasts to your swords: let us be killed, let us be sacrificed, let us be cut to pieces; we will bear it without resistance, without opening our mouths to complain.

We ask but one favour, Petronius, and that a very just one. We do not pretend you should refuse to obey the orders you have received. Grant us only a delay sufficient for us to send the emperor a deputation, with our most humble remonstrances. Our case is so good, our credit so great, we do not fear of moving him. When we shall have represented to him the holiness of our religion, our zeal for the traditions of our forefathers, and our just confidence in him that he will not use us worse than other nations, who are permitted to observe their own customs: in short, the example of Caius's own ancestors, who have maintained us in the possession of our privileges; some one of these motives will make an impression on him, and induce him to alter his mind. The wills of princes are not irrevocable, and those, especially, that are hastily dictated by anger, are liable to as sudden changes. We have been traduced and misrepresented; suffer us to defend ourselves; it is very hard to be condemned without being heard. If we obtain no favour, you will still be at liberty to do whatever you may think proper. But until we have presented our supplications to the emperor, do not cut off the last hopes of a nation *spread over all parts of the habitable globe*, and whose motive in this is piety, not interest."*

Upon that officer asking them whether they would rather make war with Cæsar, they replied they would not make war, but would rather die than transgress their laws.

Penetrated with this extraordinary spectacle, and respecting

* Crevier, iii. 90—92.

the conscientious feeling of the immense multitude before him, Petronius suspended the execution of his orders, and that at the hazard of his own life, till he received fresh instructions from the emperor, to whom he dispatched an account of the proceedings of the Jews, as favourable as he durst represent them.

Providentially, Herod-Agrippa was then at Rome, and when he waited upon Caligula, without knowing what had happened at Jerusalem, the tyrant thus addressed him; "Your fine countrymen, said he to him, who, of all the people in the universe, refuse divinity to Caius, are seeking death, and they shall find it. I have ordered a statue of Jupiter to be erected in their temple; and they have seditiously rose, and deserting the country, are coming all together here to present a pretended petition: this is rebelling against my commands." Agrippa heard no more, but, as if struck with thunder, the king of the Jews dropped down in a fit, and was carried home senseless, and almost without life. Though ambitious, and given to show and pleasure, yet he had a sincere respect and veneration for his religion. Love of his country touched him too; and when his senses returned, the first use he made of them was to write to Caius, and beg he would be merciful to that unhappy people. In the concluding paragraph of his letter he thus addresses him: "To you, says he, I owe my liberty, my life, my kingdom; *take them all from me, rather than infringe our holy laws.* If I cannot obtain this favour, I must surely somehow have incurred your displeasure; if that be the case, take my life; for how can I value it when deprived of your favour, which alone renders it sweet and pleasing to me."*

For the moment, Agrippa succeeded, but from a curious

* Crevier, iii. 94, 95. This account is taken from Philo, which Crevier prefers to that which is given by Josephus.

interview which afterwards took place between Caligula, and Philo of Alexandria, and other ambassadors from the Jews in that city, and which is worth reading, it seems pretty clear that the tyrant would have eventually enforced his purpose at all risk of human life, if God had not seen fit, in infinite mercy to his persecuted people, to deprive Caligula of his own life.*

When Claudius ascended the imperial throne, on the assassination of Caligula, he not only confirmed Agrippa in his authority, but made an addition to it of all Judea and Samaria, as held by his grandfather, Herod the Great: and also Abila† of Lysanias, as out of his proper dominions.‡

It might have been expected that the persecution, from

* Crevier, iii. 80—101. "*In infinite mercy to his persecuted people,*" for may we not readily imagine that it was chiefly on this account that the tyrant was cut off?—We remember to have somewhere read a remark of Frederick the Great, who, infidel as he was, could say, *no monarch ever meddled with the Jews without burning his fingers.* It is true that Caligula had committed crimes enough to call down the vengeance of heaven, but God has nothing to do with the world, except for the sake of his church; and thus it is that we see crimes go unpunished for ages, unless the interests of his saints require his especial interference, the secret of which is that the wicked are given up to their own hearts' lusts; in other words, "Nay, but while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." Matt. xiii. 29.

† "Here St. Luke is in some measure confirmed, where he informs us (chap. iii. 1.) that Lysanias was some time before tetrarch of Abilene, whose capital was Abila; as he is further confirmed by Ptolemy, the great geographer, which Spanheim here observes, when he calls that city Abila of Lysanias. See the note on B. xvii. ch. xi. sect. 4. vol. ii. and Prid. at the years 36 and 22. I esteem this principality to have belonged to the land of Canaan originally, to have been the burying place of Abel, and referred to as such, Matt. xxiii. 35. Luke, xi. 51. See Authent. Rec. part ii. p. 883—885." Whiston's Jos. iii. 142.

‡ Jos. iii. 142.

which Agrippa and the whole Jewish nation had themselves so lately escaped, might have induced them to abstain from violating the consciences of their brethren, who had avowed their belief in the true and only Messiah; but not so,* for this same Agrippa, with his additional authority, became himself a persecutor, being the prince of whom St. Luke says, Now, about that time, Herod the king† stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. Then were the days of unleavened bread; and when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him, intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. Peter, therefore, was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And behold the angel of Jehovah came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying; Arise up quickly, and his chains fell from off his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thy-

* And the same animosity against all who believe in Jesus continues to this day; for if travellers and historians are to be believed, in Mahometan and popish countries, where themselves are but barely tolerated, the Jews are always amongst the first to promote and excite a persecution of the Christians. And to any of their own race, who become Christians, the most opprobrious epithets, such as Meshumet, &c., and all manner of reviling and ill treatment, are constantly applied. The divine Saviour himself is never spoken of by them but as the Tolu, or the hanged one.

† He was so called to distinguish him from his uncle, Herod the Tetrarch, and his proper name was Herod-Agrippa.*

* Bos. 18.

self, and bind on thy sandals; and so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out and followed him, and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city, which opened to them of its own accord, and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety that Jehovah hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the Jews. And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together, praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how Jehovah had brought him out of prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

Now, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Cæsarea, and there abode.

And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon; but they came with one accord to him, and having

made Blastus, the king's chamberlain, their friend, desired peace, because their country was nourished by the king's country.

And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of Jehovah smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.*

When he died, he left a son named Agrippa, who is known as Agrippa II.† and who was only seventeen years old when his father died. Claudius would have bestowed upon him all his father's dominions, but was dissuaded by his courtiers from intrusting so young a man with such an important jurisdiction; whereupon Claudius appointed Cuspius Fadus procurator of Judea.‡

On the death, however, of his uncle, the king of Chalcis, the emperor gave him his territories, and with them his authority over the temple.§

Afterwards, during the procuratorship of Felix, Claudius took from Agrippa the kingdom of Chalcis, and gave him the tetrarchy of Philip and Batarea, with those of Trachonitis and Abila.‖

Our Saviour had distinctly foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and the entire overthrow of the whole Jewish polity;¶ and irrespective of that divine prescience which was inherent in his nature, the circumstances of Jewish affairs, in connexion with Rome, were such as naturally to point to some serious convulsion. On the one hand, the magnificent but cumbrous

* Acts, xii. 1—23. Crevier, iii. 292. Bas. 21. Jos. iii. 150—153.
† See pedigree, p. 480. ‡ Bas. 21. Jos. iii. 154.
§ Jos. iii. 168. ‖ Jos. iii. 172.
¶ Matt. xxiii. 33—39. xxiv. 2.

edifice of the Roman empire was fast tottering towards its fall, and the seeds of its own dissolution were but too manifest to the reflecting mind; and on the other, the semi-regal and very extensive authority which was intrusted to Agrippa, at the same time keeping Roman governors as his superiors, who retained the power of life and death, and were the actual sovereigns of the country, was calculated to excite jealousy and dissention, and absolutely involved an imperium in imperio.

Many disturbances had already arisen from this state of things, so that even during our Saviour's sojourning on earth, and before the history of the New Testament closes, many seditions and tumults had taken place. Some on account of insults offered by the pagans to the religion of Jehovah, about which many of the Jews were extremely jealous, although they had lost sight of its spirituality;* the apostle Paul bearing them record that they had a zeal of God, though not according to knowledge;† and others in respect of pretended Messiahs,‡ besides those which related exclusively to political matters.§

the fiat of Jehovah had gone forth, and the irresistible leaven was powerfully at work.

During the reign of Claudius, the Galilean Jews, who were obliged to pass through Samaria in order to go to worship at the temple in Jerusalem, had been ill treated by their old enemies, who were protected by the intendant of Judea, Ventidius Cumanus; but upon appealing to Rome, through the influence of Agrippa, they obtained relief, and three of the Samaritan chiefs were condemned to death, and Cumanus banished. And soon after this, all the Jews were banished from Rome, including no doubt the Christians; for Suetonius says, they were tumultuous, being urged on by Chrest.*

As the pagans had not as yet any distinctive notion between the Jews who were, and were not converted to Christianity, it is probable that it was the Christians chiefly who were the subjects of this persecution.

Claudius had been succeeded in the empire by the execrable Nero, who gave to Agrippa, in addition to his former territories, Abila, Julias in Peræa, Tarichæa, and Tiberias of Galilee, with their respective tetrarchies, but continued Felix in the procuratorship of Judea.†

Portius Festus having succeeded Felix in the procuratorship, St. Paul was brought at Cæsarea before him and Agrippa, with his sister Bernice, and thus addressed them; "I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews; especially, because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews; wherefore, I beseech thee to hear me patiently. My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, which know me from the beginning, if they would

* Crevier, iii. 296. † Jos. iii. 394.

testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon, as I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests, at mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision; but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds. And when he had thus spoken, the king arose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them: and when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might

have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar.*

During the government of Festus, he apprehended and executed many of the robbers; but being soon succeeded by Albinus, who was both vicious and rapacious, during his administration the seeds of various factions were sown, which soon afterwards broke out and ended in the destruction of the devoted city.†

Albinus was succeeded by Gessius Florus, who even exceeded his predecessor in every species of enormity; and so degenerated by this time was the empire become, that although the Jews made complaints to Cestius Gallus, who was the president of Syria, they could obtain no redress. Florus, however, was so conscious of his malpractices, that he was sensible the only way to protect himself from a prosecution at Rome was to stimulate the Jews to a revolt by renewed atrocities, and this object he steadily pursued till he succeeded.‡

An opportunity soon occurred which Florus failed not to

veying an insinuation that the Jews were a leprous nation,* inflamed them almost to madness. The Roman officer, Jucundus, having failed in repressing the Cæsareans, the Jews retired with their sacred books to Narbata, and John, and twelve of the principal of their people, went to Florus, who, instead of redressing their injury, put them into prison.†

The inhabitants of Jerusalem, though much incensed at this treatment of their countrymen, were disposed to acquiesce; but Florus invented a new motive for excitement, by sending to take seventy talents of the sacred treasure, under pretence that Nero wanted them. This conduct excited the people to the utmost, who, at one time exclaiming against Florus, and at another time calling upon Cæsar to redress them, were on the point of breaking out into an open revolt; in order to ensure which, Florus suddenly marched some troops against the city. The citizens, however, still restrained themselves, even when Capito, the Roman officer, dispersed them by force; but the next day, Florus himself erecting a tribunal, called for all the offenders, when the high priests and rulers urged upon him to adopt more moderate measures. Enraged at this remonstrance, he ordered his soldiers to plunder the upper market place, and which they put into execution; robbing, plundering, and murdering three thousand men, women, and children, besides several whom Florus ordered to be crucified; some of whom were of equestrian dignity.‡

* By this action, the killing of a bird over an earthen vessel, the Jews were exposed as a leprous people; for that was to be done by their law in the cleansing of a leper. (Lev. chap. xiv.) It is also known that the Gentiles reproached the Jews as subject to the leprosy, and believed that they were driven out of Egypt on that account. This that eminent person Mr. Reland suggested to me.—Dr. Hudson. Whiston's note on Jos. iii. 399.

† Jos. iii. 400. ‡ Jos. iii. 401.

request, that she escaped herself not without difficul

A tumult having taken place in consequence,
populace inveighing loudly against the Roman gove
priests and rulers were alarmed for the result, and
their garments, entreated the people to moderate the
ment, and succeeded in persuading them to do so.‡

But Florus was determined that the matter shoul
so; therefore, having persuaded the priests and rule
vail on the people to go out and meet some Roman
who were coming from Cæsarea, as a token of frie
peace, he previously instructed the latter not to re
salutations, and if any expression of dissatisfactio
consequence, to fall upon them immediately. W
difficulty the people were prevailed upon to comply
priests were obliged to have recourse to the most ur
suasions to induce them thereto. But having
acquiesced, and then experienced the premeditated in
the Romans, their reproaches against Florus becam
upon which the Romans, as previously instructed,
them and pursued them into the city, and forced
through Bezetha; and being joined by Florus, att
make themselves masters of Antonia, but were prev
the people, who not only withstood them in the str
from the tops of the houses galled them with darts

And in order to guard against future attempts, the Jews cut off the communications between the castle of Antonia and the temple, lest if Florus obtained possession of the former, he might easily seize upon the treasures of the latter, and which indeed was his chief object; for when he found that he was defeated, he quitted the city, leaving only one band of soldiers in it; and the priests and rulers promising they would make no innovations in the government.*

Still intent upon the same object, Florus made complaints to Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria, that the Jews had begun a revolt; but the government of Jerusalem and Bernice having made contrary representations, Cestius sent Neapolitanus, one of his tribunes, to inquire into the circumstances. Agrippa, who was then on his return from Alexandria, met Neapolitanus at Jamnia, and both proceeded together to Jerusalem, where the tribune was soon convinced that the Jews were not to blame, and returned to Cestius favourably impressed.

Agrippa, however, finding that many of the people were desirous to send an embassy to Rome to lay a formal accusation of Florus before Nero, assembled them in a large gallery, and in the presence of his sister Bernice addressed them at great length, and with much eloquence, with tears entreating them, and in which he was joined by his sister, to abstain from all acts of violence, and not to give any just cause of offence to the Romans;† withal urging them to pay the tribute which had been suspended, and to restore the cloisters which united the temple to the tower of Antonia.

Many of the people acquiesced in this reasoning, but others of them declaring they would not fight with the Romans,

* Jos. iii. 405.

† See this very interesting speech at length in Jos. iii. 407. and Whiston's note; also Crevier, vi. 127. At the conclusion of his speech both Agrippa and Bernice wept bitterly.

Agrippa, therefore, sent their rulers and men of
Florus, at Cæsarea, in order that he might appoint
pleased to collect the tribute, and returned home hi
his own kingdom.*

The tide of events, however, was now impetuousl
onwards, and the war commenced by some of the Je
denly seizing upon Massada, and slaying all the Rom
were there. Besides which, Eleazar, the son of An
high priest, who was then governor of the temple, p
those who officiated not to receive any gift or sacrif
foreigner, thereby excluding the emperor himself;
Josephus considers to have been the real cause o
which ensued.†

The Jews were at this time divided amongst the
Eleazar, with those who were disposed to revolt, or
Josephus calls them, were the innovators and seditio
the priests, rulers, and more respectable inhabitants, w
alarmed at the danger of exciting the anger and veng
the Romans, and having in vain tried every expe
induce Eleazar and his party to restrain their viole
ambassadors both to Florus and Agrippa, to request
come with armies, and endeavour to prevent that ru
threatened them. Florus, however, saw in the pres

Upon the arrival of these auxiliaries, a civil war commenced, Eleazar and his party striving to gain possession of the upper city, whilst the troops of Agrippa and the friends of peace exerted themselves to secure the lower city and the temple; and thus, for seven days together, they mutually assailed each other with stones, slings, and darts.*

But on the festival of Xylophory,† several of the Sicarii‡ having joined the seditious party, they attacked the king's soldiers with more boldness; and driving them out of the upper city, they set fire to the house of Ananias, the high priest, and to the palaces of Agrippa and Bernice, and finally the place where the archives were deposited, and the contracts by which the debtors had bound themselves to their creditors. They then besieged Antonia, which having forced, they slew the garrison; and after that attacked the palace. Manahem, the son of Judas the Galilean, having retired to Massada, and broken open king Herod's armory, assumed the command of the incendiaries; when undermining one of the towers, the besieged proposed a capitulation, which was granted to such of them as were Jews; but most of the Romans were slain whilst they were endeavouring to escape to the towers of Hippicus, Phasælus, and Mariamne, and their camp set fire to.§

During these disturbances Ananias, the high priest, had concealed himself in an aqueduct, but being discovered was slain with his brother Hezekiah; and Manahem and Eleazar having quarrelled, their respective partisans fought in the temple itself, and the former was driven out of the city. The

* Jos. iii. 417.

† Upon which occasion the custom was for every one to bring wood for the altar, that there might never be a want of fuel for the sacred fire. Jos. iii. 417. Lev. vi. 13.

‡ Cutthroats or assassins, one of the hostile bands of Jews, whose dissentions contributed to the destruction of Jerusalem, were so called. Jos. iv. 259. 264. 274, 275.

§ Jos. iii. 419.

But the fire was now kindling in all directions far an
and the vial of God's wrath was fast pouring out, and
the atrocities that were committed, and the extraor
transactions which took place, as they are related in Jo
are such as almost to compel one to exclaim, Credat
Apelles!

On the same day that the horrid slaughter above men
took place at Jerusalem, the inhabitants of Cæsare
twenty thousand Jews in that city, and by the help of
drove all the rest on board the gallies. This so enra
whole nation, that dividing themselves into bands, th
waste all the towns and villages they could subdu
amongst the rest, burnt Sebaste to the ground. This of
produced recrimination, and the whole province beca
vast slaughterhouse.†

At Scythopolis, thirteen thousand Jews were assas
in cold blood; at Damascus, ten thousand within an
and a Jew of the name of Simon, after putting to de
father, mother, wife, and children, slew himself with
sword. At Askalon, two thousand five hundred Jew
slain; at Ptolemais, two thousand; at Tyre, Hipp
Gadara, great numbers; and the rest they put into
the Antiochians, Sidonians, Apanians, and Gerasens.

Commotions took place also in the kingdom of Agrippa; and at Alexandria, no less than fifty thousand men, women, and children were slain by the inhabitants and Roman soldiers, under the command of Tiberius Alexander.*

One cannot avoid surprise that a Roman commander should not have interfered, before revolt, in a province under his command, had arrived to such a height. At length, however, Cestius collected his troops, and being joined by four thousand men under Agrippa, and taking possession of Zebulun, a city of Galilee,† his soldiers first plundered, and then set fire to it. Thence marching to Cæsarea, the Jews in the mean time rallying in his rear, he seized upon Joppa and slew eight thousand four hundred men, and took, and burnt, and plundered all the villages in the toparchy of Narbatene. Gallus, one of his generals, at the same time marching against Sepphoris, the strongest city of Galilee, was received by the inhabitants with acclamations, and thus the cities in that province were kept in comparative tranquillity; the seditious part of the populace retiring to the mountains, when two thousand of them were slain.‡

Cestius, proceeding to Antipatris, dispersed a party of Jews that were in a tower at Aphek; and thence marching to Lydda, many of whose inhabitants were gone to Jerusalem to the feast of tabernacles, he slew fifty of those who remained, and burned the city; and passing by Bethoron, he encamped at Gabao, within fifty furlongs of Jerusalem. The Jews, however, far from being intimidated, abandoning their sacred rites, marched out of the city on the sabbath day, and attacking the Romans, almost defeated the whole army, but at length retired, though with much less loss than their adversaries.

Agrippa, alarmed on all accounts for the result, sent two of

* Jos. iii. 426. † Jos. iii. 427. ‡ Jos. iii. 428.

quarrelling amongst themselves, Cestius attacked them,
putting them to flight, pursued them to Jerusalem.

Cestius besieged the city for several days, and it
seem might easily have taken it, and put an end to the
but, as Josephus imagines, was diverted from his purp
some officers of Florus, who was not desirous the war
end even so, although he himself gives a much more pr
reason for his conduct, viz.; the "Aversation of God
city and sanctuary." Most unaccountably, therefore,
all military principles, but as most mercifully intend
God,—thereby giving to his affrighted but believing Chri
an opportunity to avail themselves of the orders given
by our Lord himself, that when they should see the abo
tion of desolation stand where it ought not, and Jerusale
compassed with armies, they should flee to the mountain
the Roman general after a few days withdrew his troop
finally retreated, and that not without difficulty, purs
the Jews as far as Antipatris, who committed great sla
upon his troops, and taking possession of baggage and
returned to Jerusalem singing and rejoicing.†

Upon their return the revolters, reflecting that th
now proceeded too far to retract, began to organiz
troops, and arrange their affairs in regular order. J
the son of Gorion, and Ananas, the high priest, were

Eleazar still retained the chief authority. They then selected generals over the different districts, and amongst others, the historian Josephus himself, to whom was entrusted the command of the two Galilees, including the strong city of Gamala.*

As it might be expected, this writer is at least sufficiently minute as to what relates to his own operations; and if all his representations are correct, against which there does not in the main appear to be any substantial objection, he was not only a commander of ability, but a wise and judicious civil governor. Being, however, as well as the great majority of his countrymen, under the sentence of judicial blindness, and therefore imagining that the law of Moses was to be of perpetual obligation, he made that the rule and standard of all his civil regulations, and seems to have aimed at the restoration of that ritual in its original purity and splendour, wherever his influence and authority extended.†

Another Jewish commander of distinction was John of Gischala,‡ between whom and Josephus there was either great rivalry, or the former endeavoured to supplant and injure the latter throughout the war.§

It is not our intention to trace minutely all the transactions of this protracted warfare, which lasted several years, and by means of which, and the massacres, civil wars, famines, and other causes of depopulation and wretchedness, and finally by the taking and burning of the city and temple itself, it pleased Almighty God to put an end to the civil polity of his ancient people; and by rendering it absolutely impossible to continue the exercise and performance of their ceremonial worship, shewed to a demonstration, that the time

* Jos. iii. 435. † Jos. iii. 436—438.
‡ The son of Levi. See his character in Jos. iii. 438.
§ Jos. iii. 438. 445.

had at length arrived when it was to cease for
remaining events of the war, and the siege of
city, will, therefore, be only cursorily noticed.

Amongst others who took advantage of th
Cestius from Jerusalem, were Saul and Costabar
thers, and Philip, the son of Jacimus, the co
Agrippa's troops; and at their own request Cestius
Achaia, to lay before Nero the distress and misery
their city and nation were plunged, and to accuse
being the author of the whole mischief; and pr
the further object thereby to excuse his own ne
mismanagement.*

As the revolt proceeded and became general
proportionably alarmed, and at length fixed upon
a veteran commander,† to reduce the province t
and restore tranquillity.‡

Before that general's arrival, the Jews had atta
lon, but were defeated by Antonius with the l
thousand men.§ Having arrived at Antioch an

* Jos. iii. 434.

† He was born at a village near Rieti, the 17th Nov
760. His father, whose name was T. Flavius Sabi
with so much integrity and moderation as a farmer o
penny, a duty levied on all kinds of merchandize,
towns had his picture, under which they wrote this in
the honest publican. A surname taken from his mo
was given him, so that he was called T. Flavius Vesp
was brought up by his father's mother, Tertulla, at
had near Cosa, in Tuscany. He was always fond of the

from thence, Vespasian formed a junction with Agrippa and the troops under his command, and proceeded to Ptolemais. Being afterwards joined by his son Titus,* they marched into Galilee, and after taking Gadara,† besieged Jotopata in form, into which Josephus, who had been prevented by Titus from taking possession of Sepphoris,‡ had retired with all the troops he could collect. The siege lasted forty-seven days, and exhibited many curious and interesting transactions, and the city was finally betrayed by a deserter, and the fortifications demolished by order of Vespasian.§ Joppa and Tarichæa were next taken, and Tiberias delivered up; and then Gamala, where Agrippa was wounded by a sling from the wall whilst addressing his countrymen, and trying to persuade them to surrender;‖ and Gischala, from which latter, John of Gischala, the individual before mentioned, and who had chiefly excited this small city to resistance, contrived to make his own escape to Jerusalem.¶

It was probably from the prisoners whom Vespasian had taken in the conquest of the above mentioned cities, that he sent to Nero six thousand workmen, to assist in the undertaking which that emperor had personally engaged in, of piercing, or, as modern speculators would say, boring, a tunnel through the Isthmus of Corinth, but after seventy-five days' labour he suddenly abandoned it.**

* Jos. iv. 13. † Jos. iv. 15. 97. 103. ‡ Jos. iv. 7.
§ Jos. iv. 15—33. Crevier, vi. ‖ Jos. iv. 55. ¶ Jos. iv. 62.

** The superstition of the people opposed that design; they were afraid of violating the laws of nature, by joining what she had separated. Facts, either magnified or entirely the offspring of fear, were alleged in support of that opinion. It was said, that at the first stroke struck into the earth, blood had gushed out; that groans had been heard as if from subterraneous caverns; and that phantoms had appeared to the inhabitants of those parts. The vulgar were not the only ones prejudiced. Pliny, who is far from being super-

And now, whilst the Roman legions were hovering round Jerusalem, having subdued Galilee and almost all Judea, and placed garrisons in all the minor cities, and unconscious of their high commission or the divine hand by which they were led, were nevertheless ready to pour out the vengeance of Almighty God upon this devoted people, as soon as he withheld his restraining influence; it is of some importance to enquire into the state of the unhappy inhabitants of that city, to which our Lord himself had addressed his pathetic exhortation.*

It is impossible, however, to conceive, even faintly, what that state was without reading Josephus himself at length.† The whole surrounding country was either possessed by the foreign troops, or filled with the miserable fugitives who had escaped from the various cities which had yielded to their arms. Those who thus succeeded in their flight, poured from all quarters into Jerusalem, as to the ark of that God whom they had abandoned, whose worship they had insulted, and whose divine Son they had crucified; vainly hoping that against the holy sanctuary the arms of the Italian foe would be pointed in vain. Thus an immense population was congregated within the walls of Jerusalem, including all the factions, and all the various and conflicting interests of the several cities which had been subdued, whilst in that city

stitious, speaks of the attempt to pierce the Isthmus as of a fatal rashness, and alleges the unhappy end of four princes who set about it, Demetrius Poliocrates, Cæsar, Caligula, and Nero. The work was begun on the side next the Ionian Sea, at a place called Lechæum, a seaport belonging to Corinth, and was carried on with great diligence for seventy-five days, in which time was dug the length of four stadia, which was about a tenth part of the breadth of the Isthmus. On the seventy-fifth day came a sudden order from Nero, who remained at Corinth, to give over the work. Crevier, iv. 307, 308.

* Luke, xiii. 34. See p. 488. † Jos. iv. 65—98. Luke, xix. 41—44.

itself were both fit materials and instruments for the most desolating havoc and fury. Amongst them were the zealots, who were no better than a band of robbers; the Idumæans, who had been introduced into the city by their means; John of Gischala, who led the war party; Simon and his party; Eleazar and his party; the old priests, who still affected regard for the sanctuary; the new priests made out of course and contrary to the Levitical institution; and various individual leaders, all striving for mastery amongst themselves, and much more anxious to destroy one another, which they did every day by thousands, than to adopt proper and judicious measures for the resistance of the enemy, whom they affected to despise on account of the height and strength of the walls of the city.* At length matters rose to such a height that the zealots and Idumæans forced the temple, and murdered Ananas, the high priest, and Jesus, and Zacharias,† in the temple itself; in the outer court of which no less than eight thousand five hundred dead bodies‡ lay at once; and so horrible was the fury of the former, that at length the Idumæans themselves were panic-struck, and withdrew to their own country, absolutely refusing to partake any longer in these atrocious barbarities.§

* Jos. iv. 65—84.

† See Whiston's note, Jos. iv. 88, as to Matt. xxiii. 35.

‡ Walafrid Strabo, Abbé de Richnou, a French monk of the age of Charlemagne, in a sermon on Luke, xix. 38, thus describes the scene.—"Jacebant igitur corpora juvenum per plateas civitatis, magis fame quam ætate defecta. Nullus juxta morem sepeliebatur, quia nec multitudo morientium, nec virium debilitas, hoc sinebat. Nonnulli corpora carorum suorum sepelire curantes, super ipsorum tumulos spiritum emittebant. Cumque tabes magnus et intolerabilis fœtor essent in civitate, cœperunt corpora mortuorum extra muros projicere, intantum ut corpora ipsis muris coæquari viderentur." Ranken's History of France, vol. ii. 290.

§ Jos. iv. 89.

It is not to be wondered at that many of Vespasian's officers, should deem this period of civil conflict and international bloodslaughter, a fit season for attacking and subjugating the city. Not exactly so the general himself, who replied to their remonstrances, "That they were greatly mistaken in what they thought fit to be done, as those that upon the theatre love to make a show of their hands and of their weapons, but do it to their own hazard, without considering what was for their advantage, and for their security; for that if they now go and attack the city immediately, they shall but occasion their enemies to unite together, and shall convert their force, now it is in its height, against themselves; but if they stay awhile they shall have fewer enemies, because they will be consumed in this sedition: that God acts as a general of the Romans better than he can do, and is giving the Jews up to them without any pains of their own, and granting their army a victory without any danger; that, therefore, it is their best way, while their enemies are destroying each other with their own hands, and falling into the greatest of misfortunes, which is that of sedition, to sit still as spectators of the dangers they run into, rather than to fight hand to hand with men that love murdering, and are mad one against another. But if any one imagines that the glory of victory, when it is gotten without fighting, will be more inspired, let him know this much, that a glorious success, quietly obtained, is more profitable than the dangers of a battle; for we ought to esteem those that do what is agreeable to temperance and prudence, no less glorious than those that have gained great reputation by their actions in war: that he shall lead on his army with greater force when their enemies are diminished, and his own army refreshed after the continual labours they had undergone. However, that this is not a proper time to propose to ourselves the glory of victory; for that the Jews are not now employed in making of armour, or building of

walls, nor indeed in getting together auxiliaries, while the advantage will be on their side who gave them such opportunity of delay: but that the Jews are vexed to pieces every day by their civil wars and dissentions, and are under greater miseries than, if they were once taken, could be inflicted on them by us. Whether, therefore, any one hath regard to what is for our safety, he ought to suffer these Jews to destroy one another; or whether he hath regard to the greater glory of the action, we ought by no means to meddle with these men, now they are afflicted with a distemper at home; for should we now conquer them, it would be said, the conquest was not owing to our bravery, but to their sedition."*

The commanders having acquiesced in the prudence of this advice, the Roman legions remained quiet, only cutting off and destroying all those who attempted to leave the city, or who were driven out by their more powerful countrymen; nor can we imagine any situation more dreadful than that of the conscientious, however mistaken Jews, at this period, if in fact any such were then remaining in the city.

Vespasian himself, however, began now to think of investing Jerusalem, and therefore, drew his troops out of their garrisons and was preparing for the siege, when he received news from Rome of the assassination of Nero; and the death of that tyrant being followed in rapid succession by those of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, the choice of the Roman legions at length fell upon Vespasian himself; who, after securing Egypt, went to Rome to assume the purple, sending his son Titus back to Judea, upon whom he devolved the future conduct of the Jewish war.†

* Jos. iv. 91, 92.

† Jos. iv. 103—120. See a very neat account of the siege and subsequent dispersion of the Jews, in Jolliffe's Sixth Letter from Palestine. An absurd interpretation of our sacred oracles, famous throughout all the east, gave an additional weight and credit to that

But such was the judicial blindness of the Jews, that nothing could awaken them to a sense of their danger; and, therefore, so far from employing the temporary departure of the Roman generals to heal their own divisions, and prepare for their defence, a new sedition sprung up in the country; for Simon of Gerasa, a son of Giora, at the head of a strong band of partisans, rose up in opposition to John of Gischala, and involved the inhabitants in multiplied calamities.*

At length the fiat† of Jehovah went forth, and Titus,

same opinion. The prophecies by which it was foretold that the chief and deliverer of nations should arise in Judea, were applied to Vespasian. Tacitus has fallen into that mistake, not to be wondered at in him. But what we cannot help being surprised at is, that a worshipper and priest of the true God, the historian Josephus, should have made so shameful an abuse of the Scriptures. "Blind, says M. Bossuet, blind indeed, so to give away the hopes of Jacob and of Judah to strangers, by seeking in Vespasian the son of Abraham and of David, and ascribing to an idolatrous prince the title of him whose light was to convert the Gentiles from idolatry." Crevier, v. 211.

* Jos. iv. 103—111. 121—126.

† Who can omit to contrast the state of this once beloved, but now *almost* forsaken and abandoned race, at the siege of Jerusalem in the reign of Zedekiah, melancholy as even that was, (see p. 264.) with the much greater alienation from their God, at this final breaking up of their state and polity; this irrecoverable overthrow of their throne and their altars! Then amidst all the horrors of the siege and the alarm of the enemy, and even the denunciations of the wrath of God, there was still the full *presence* of Jehovah, the pardoning, promising God,—and the promise of restoration;—then there still existed a holy Jeremiah and other prophets, who were known to hold intercourse with God; and though not believed, though despised and even ill treated by the unbelieving king, many, no doubt, of the people derived comfort from their revelations, and stayed themselves upon their God. But now all was a blank—the voice of prophecy had closed for more than four hundred years—there was no oracle to which recourse could be had—the priests had become as bad as

accompanied by Agrippa,* drew near and enclosed the city, and after a protracted siege of several months, accompanied with scenes of misery and distress without parallel, and supernatural signs and wonders,† Jerusalem fell a prey, not less to intestine fury and madness, than to the arms of the Roman foe: and even the temple and holy house itself was reduced to ashes, contrary to the wish and intention of Titus; but, as Josephus himself says, "by means of a Roman soldier, who, without staying for orders, and without any concern or dread upon him, but hurried on by a certain divine fury, set fire to one of the golden windows."‡ And of the same opinion was Titus himself, when he exclaimed on beholding the remains of the massive towers and walls, "God has been our conductor in this war, it is God who has driven the Jews from these fortresses, against which all the strength

the people—the Idumæan princes had become half paganized—and the whole nation (except those few into whose hearts the light of the everlasting Gospel had shone) were sunk into the most abominable sensuality and brutality; exhibiting to an astonished world,—even to their pagan enemies,—a wonderful instance how low, how desperately low, and depraved, and brutalized, a nation may become, who, having forsaken God, are by him, in righteous judgment, given up to their own hearts' lusts. Such a spectacle as was never exhibited before or since, till the French revolution displayed its horrors! What child is there who would not rather endure the reproof of an affectionate parent, than be for ever deprived of his advice and assistance?—and who cannot distinguish between the comparative comfort of being reproached by a steady and faithful friend, and the feeling of utter despair, occasioned by being finally deprived of his advice and assistance, especially of that friend's all-powerful, all-wise, and friendly arm. Lam. iv. 12.

* Crev. vi. 195. Tac. Hist. v. 4.

† See an account of these extraordinary prodigies in Jos. iv. 218. confirmed by Tacitus, Hist. v. 13.

‡ Jos. iv. 212. 126. 232. Crevier, vi. 238. 194. 252.

the days should come in the which there shou
left one stone upon another, that should not be thro
And this was literally fulfilled, when Titus, immed
his victory, ordered every thing to be entirely d
except the three towers before mentioned, and t
wall, which he reserved for the benefit of the troop
to remain there: all else, walls, fortifications, t
every other building were laid even with the grou
destroyed, that no mark remained of that spot h
inhabited. The Romans used generally, on these

* Crevier, vi. 245. See also Bp. Chandler's Defen
tianity, vol. i. 358. If any evidence were wanting to
fact, it would be found in the circumstance, that the de
the city and temple arose exclusively from the factions o
the few who were moderate; and thus, by refusing to s
Romans, who sought not their destruction but only their
these latter were at last compelled to destroy them for
their own arms, which after all would nevertheless ha
nished and soiled, if God had not alike decreed and exec
purposes. As we have already seen (p. 294.) that a
Babylonians were used by Jehovah, as his instruments
pose of destroying Jerusalem the first time, and execu
judgment of God against his rebellious people; yet h
overthrew that mighty empire to the uttermost, for ha
them with cruelty: (Zech. i. 15. Jer. l. 11.) is it to

to plough up the places. The oldest Jewish writers, quoted by Scaliger, say they did so with respect to Jerusalem.*

Agrippa had gone to Rome to congratulate Galba on his accession, who was assassinated before his arrival:† but had evidently returned before the siege, at which he was present with a large body of troops.‡ His kingdom was exempt from the punishment inflicted upon the other Jews, on account of his fidelity to the Romans;§ but whether he administered its affairs himself, or by deputy, and resided at Rome, appears uncertain, as all we hear further of him is, that Josephus submitted his history to his inspection, apparently at Rome, and wrote two letters to him authenticating its accuracy, and that he was dead when Josephus wrote his book against Apion.‖

Besides the territories of Agrippa, the little town and territory of Emmaus was exempted from severity, in which

* Crevier, vi. 240. Keith, 74,

Comment en un plomb vil l'or pur s'est-il changé?
Quel est dans ce lieu saint ce pontife égorgé?
Pleure, Jérusalem, pleure, cité perfide,
Des prophètes divins malheureuse homicide:
De son amour pour toi ton Dieu s'est dépouillé;
Ton encens à ses yeux est un encens souillé.
Où menez-vous ces enfans et ces femmes?
Le Seigneur a détruit la reine des cités:
Ses prêtres sont captifs, ses rois sont rejetés!
Dieu ne veut plus qu'on vienne à ses solemnités:
Temple, reverse-toi; cèdres, jetez des flammes.
Jérusalem, objet de ma douleur,
Quelle main en un jour t'a ravi tous tes charmes?
Qui changera mes yeux en deux sources de larmes
Pour pleurer ton malheur?

RACINE.

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest. Micah, iii. 12.

† Jos. iv. 104. ‡ Crevier, vi. 195.

§ Crevier, vi. 262.

‖ Jos. iii. 235. iv. 287. Crevier, vi. 266.

Vespasian had formed a camp during the siege,* and afterwards settled a colony of eight hundred veterans;† and this colony was afterwards restored by Alexander Severus; but by whom the name of Nicopolis, or the city of victory, was given, seems doubtful.‡ A great part of the Jewish nation was utterly§ destroyed by the war, and their country becoming forfeited to the Romans, Vespasian ordered all their lands, cities, and towns, to be sold, and the produce to be paid into the imperial treasury.‖ Nor was this all, for the people themselves were sold for slaves, to such an extent as to become absolutely of little or no value.¶

The Jews in Egypt having shewed some disposition to imitate the rebellion of their brethren in Judea, Vespasian ordered the temple at Onias to be also destroyed, but it was only shut up, after being stripped of all its riches and valuables.**

THE DISPERSION.

thus HE who retaineth all power in his own hands, and with whom a thousand years are but as one day, seems to have established an ingredient in that very ritual, by which he could at a moment put an end to its performance, whenever it seemed good to him, or whenever it had accomplished the object for which it had been instituted; and, therefore, from that lamentable period to the present moment, have the Jews been "without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim."*

Oh that the seed of Abraham would seriously ask themselves, for what greater crime than idolatry can it be that they have thus endured so long, so incalculable an alienation from the favour of God; and experienced a series of calamity altogether without parallel, and so immeasurably greater than their almighty protector had ever inflicted, even for that abhorred crime of idolatry itself! Oh that they would even now turn to him whom they have pierced, and mourn, even as one mourneth for an only son!†

The dispersion‡ of the remnant of this unhappy people amongst all the nations of the world immediately followed;§ and so signal has been their preservation amidst unheard of

* Hosea, iii. 4. Without king, and without ruler, and without sacrifice, and without statue, and without ephod and teraphim. Bp. Horsley's Translation of Hosea; where see some learned and curious criticisms on this passage, and on the structure and use of the ephod, 10—65.

† Zech. xii. 10.

‡ See Tovey on the Persecutions of the Jews, Gibbon, iii. 303. ix. 251, and Basnage passim; and compare them with Deut. xxviii.

§ See the prophecies as to their dispersion and present state, collected in Keith, 75. And much useful information as to their general history, present state, &c. collected by Dr. Thornton, in his notes on Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

persecutions, that they have increased and multi
comparison, and whilst all other nations have
absorbed amongst the new races of mankind, the
preserved their original distinctions; and to th
is a standing miracle, and so stubborn as wel
witness for the truth of revelation, and the purp
that they have always proved the most inconveni
in the way of infidels and scoffers. Thus Fre
infidel king of Prussia, could say, that whatev
government ventured to meddle with the Jew
sure to smart for it. And thus has God continu
that though he had thought fit to cut them off,
has always had a yearning of tenderness towar
branches that in his own good time were to be g
into their own olive tree.*

For half a century the Jews continued broken
and dismayed, in consequence of the events con
the siege and fall† of Jerusalem; but in the reign
peror Trajan, they broke into open revolt in se
provinces where they were distributed; and a
some writers, shewed great cruelty where their
tended. Lupus, the prefect of Egypt, was defeat
under the command of a king named Lucua, and
shut himself up in Alexandria; but they were fi
powered, although not without difficulty, by Mar
who drove the Jews out of Egypt, Cyrene, and
Cyprus. Lusius Quietus was sent against thos
rebelled in Mesopotamia; and having defeated

pitched and hard fought battle, he exterminated a vast number of them, and was by Trajan entrusted with the government of Palestine.*

When Adrian, however, succeeded to the empire, distrusting for some reason the fidelity of Quietus, he removed him from his command, and appointed Martius Turbo in his stead, who succeeded in suppressing the insurrection at that time.†

Not broken in spirit, however, by these events, about eighteen years afterwards, many of them having congregated at Jerusalem and erected dwellings amongst the ruins, the emperor Adrian sent a colony of Romans there also, probably for the purpose of keeping them in order; and having erected a temple to Jupiter, where that of Jehovah formerly stood, he named the new colony Ælia Capitolina.‡ Already well enough disposed to revolt, and fired to madness at the sight of the pagan idolatry being established upon the site of their holy place, as well as encouraged by their long cherished but often defeated expectation of a Messiah, they at length again broke out into open revolt. An impostor who took the name of Barchochebas, or the son of a star,§ who, pretending that Balaam's prophesy was fulfilled in him, assumed their command, and not only destroyed the Greeks and Romans, but more unmercifully the Christians, who would neither renounce their faith in Jesus, the true Messiah, nor take any part in the revolt against the Roman government. And so formidable an aspect did the revolt in Judea assume, that Adrian sent for Julius Severus out of Britain, to command the army destined to act against them. That officer by a judicious mode of warfare subdued the revolt, having taken Bitther,‖

* Crevier, vii. 116—118. † Crevier, iii. 142. ‡ Gibb. ii. 279.

§ His real name was Akiba, Kidder on the Messiah, i. 128. iii. 107.; in which invaluable work see all the prophecies relating to Christ illustrated, and a history of all the false Messiahs.

‖ Crevier, vii. 189.

a strong town near Jerusalem, where Barchochebas was slain. It is said that this war lasted three years, during which period five hundred and eighty thousand Jews perished by the sword; it is impossible to tell the number of those who ended their miserable days by hunger, sickness, or fire; all those who escaped this shocking disaster were sold for slaves, and carried away into foreign countries, so that Judea was almost entirely depopulated. Neither was the result arrived at without an immense loss of Roman soldiers, so that when Adrian wrote an account to the senate, he abstained from styling himself emperor.*

The destruction of the Jews under Adrian was complete; they not only did not recover themselves, but any attempts they made to throw off the yoke were but trifling and without effect.

Adrian, to prevent their revolting, used an effective precaution, which was this, to forbid them the very sight of Jerusalem, where they were not permitted to enter but on one day of the year, the anniversary of the destruction of the city. St. Jerome thus describes their assembling on that melancholy day, their wretched lamentations, and the severities they suffered from the guards placed at every avenue. He was an eye-witness of all this, for he dwelt there; these are his own words: "The treacherous husbandmen," says he, alluding to the parable in the Gospel, "after

* Gibbon confirms this account, but alleges that the cruelties of the Jews had almost merited it. "In Cyrene they massacred two hundred and twenty thousand; in Cyprus, two hundred and forty thousand; in Egypt, a very great multitude. Many of these unhappy victims were sawed asunder, according to a precedent to which David had given the sanction of his example. The victorious Jews devoured the flesh, licked up the blood, and twisted the entrails like a girdle round their bodies. Dion Cassius, lib. lxviii. p. 1145." Gibb. ii. 384.

having slain the servants and likewise the Son of God, are excluded from the vineyard. The entering into Jerusalem is forbid them, but upon the day of sadness and lamentation. They must even pay for the liberty of weeping over the ruins of their city; and as formerly they purchased with money the blood of Christ, they are now obliged to pay for their own tears, which they must not shed without a price. Once a year, on the day their city was taken and destroyed by the Romans, multitudes are seen sunk in grief. Men and women loaded with years, and covered with rags, who, in their persons and every thing about them, carry evident marks of the wrath of God. Whilst the cross upon which our Lord suffered, shines upon mount Calvary, and the church, erected upon the tomb out of which he arose from the dead, glitters with gold and precious stones, and the standard placed upon mount Olivet attracts the eyes of all; this people, as undeserving of compassion as they are wretched, bewail the loss of their temple. Before they have yet done with their miserable cries, and whilst the women tearing their hair, beat their breast with repeated blows, immediately comes a soldier, who demands money of them, if they would have the liberty of weeping any longer."*

After this victory, Adrian resumed his design of rebuilding Jerusalem, or rather he built a new city, as I have said before, which he named Ælia Capitolina, the walls of which enclosed mount Calvary, and the holy sepulchre, which was not included in the ancient city, but did not take in mount Sion. In the execution of this plan, he studiously prophaned all the places which had been most revered by the Jews and Christians, with buildings set apart for the worship of idols; he built a temple in honour of Jupiter Capitolinus, upon the mountain where had stood that of the true God; he placed a

* Crevier, vii. 191.

hog of marble upon the gate of the city which looked towards Bethlehem; he erected, in the place where Jesus Christ was crucified, a statue of Venus, and, in that where he arose from the dead, a statue of Jupiter: and in the grottos at Bethlehem, where our Savoiur was born, he established the worship of Adonis.

The emperor's efforts succeeded against the Jews whom God had abandoned. Banished from Jerusalem, they have never again entered it, nor have they ever been able to rebuild their temple. Mount Sion, left without the walls of the city, has been no longer inhabited, and from that time has been put to no other use than the producing of cucumbers, and other kinds of pulse, as was predicted by the prophet Isaiah;* whereas Christianity, which God protects, continues flourishing in this new city of Adrian, with this difference only, that till then the Christian church of Jerusalem was composed of Jewish converts, but is now a church of Gentiles, of which Mark was the first bishop. And, within less than two years, the idols which Adrian had put in the places

penalties those who were not born Jews to embrace their religion.*

The emperor Constantine having, as has been alleged,† been converted by a miracle, embraced the Christian faith, and his example was soon afterwards followed by his mother Helena, of whom so much has been written. This lady, or her imperial son, built a magnificent temple for Christian worship at Jerusalem; a second at Bethlehem; and another on the mount of Olives; and it would have been well if they had confined themselves to such works, and to those of Christian faith and charity; but having found, or pretended to find, the real cross upon which the divine Saviour was crucified, a species of homage to it was then began, which soon afterwards degenerated into the grossest idolatry; and notwithstanding all the boasted enlightening of the papists, and wonderful declarations of their gullified advocates, it continues to this day,‡ with an office and ceremonies, which would be a disgrace to the darkest age that popery has ever known.§

What a spectacle for a conscientious Jew, whose judicial blindness made him consider it positive idolatry to worship the son of God himself, and what must be his reflections to behold a set of beings, otherwise rational and well informed, paying divine honours, (latria) and offering up the most fervent prayers, to the material wood upon which he was crucified!

* Crevier, viii. 112.

† Crevier, x. 54. Gibb. iii. 265. Du Pin. i. 4. 12. Mosheim, i. 324. Milner, ii. 41. Jones, i. 306. Gregory, App. to vol. i. The several edicts issued by Constantine in favour of Christianity, are enumerated by Du Pin; and the originals are, in many respects, well worth perusing, especially one relating to toleration.

‡ See my Congratulatory Letter (under the name of Ventess) to the House of Lords, p. 46. note G.

§ Crevier, x. 133. Gibb. iv. 100.

What, when they now see from day to day, and in each and every popish country, the same worship and prayers offered up, to various other pieces of wood in the form of a cross, when it is evident to common sense that the actual cross, if ever found, has been dispersed and dissipated into dust, for ages of centuries!

During the reign of Constantius, a sedition broke out amongst the Jews, which occasioned the severe laws of Adrian to be enforced against them with no little severity.*

The emperor Julian having revolted to paganism, whence he is called the apostate, felt so powerfully the importance of our Lord's incarnation before the destruction of the second temple, which rendered the pretensions of all impostors or pseudo-messiahs wholly futile,† that he was determined to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem; but having collected immense materials for that purpose, in which he was readily assisted by the Jews who collected around Jerusalem from all parts, and contributed their most valuable effects, it turned out, that though Herod and Pontius Pilate were made friends,

together, against the Lord, and against his anointed; but he that sitteth in the heavens laughed; Jehovah had them in derision."* And it is a pretty strong argument, both against Jews and infidels, that from that period to the present no one has ever dared to repeat the attempt!!†

* Ps. ii. 2. 4.

† Anxious as Gibbon is to exalt the character of Julian, and especially to display that emperor's spirit of toleration, he is compelled to notice his intolerance and hatred to Christianity alone. How melancholy that this writer could not here discover the truth of that religion, which alone was the object of Julian's hatred; and see that the same enmity of the carnal heart against God, which operated Julian's conduct, gave birth to his own sly insinuations and but ill concealed infidelity!

When Julian would have had the Jews rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, there arose such a storm as drove away those who undertook the work, and having retired into a neighbouring temple, there came forth a fire which consumed them. There also appeared a sign of the cross in the heavens, which was a mark of the victory which Jesus Christ had gotten over these impious men; and all those who saw it, or spoke of it, found their clothes marked with this sign. This miracle was so public, that many who saw it embraced immediately the Christian religion, and were baptized. Greg. Naz. *apud* Du Pin. vol. i. p. 103. of the fourth century.

Amongst the most eminent authors who have investigated the subject, or collected evidences of this fact, are Alb. Fabricius, Ammianus Marcellinus, St. Chrysostom, Newton, Mosheim, Warburton, and Moyle. Jolliffe's Letters, 67. The particular texts of Scripture which the infidels would attempt to disprove and falsify are Dan. ix. 27. as cited and illustrated by the divine Saviour in Matt. xxi. 15. 28. and Luke, xxi. 20. 24. See Bp. Chandler's Defence of Christianity, vol. i. 356. 359. The relation of Ammianus is corroborated by Socrates, Zozomen, and the Jewish rabbies Gantz and Gedalia, in the Tzemach David and the Shalsheleth Hakkabala. Also see Dr. Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. 649. Notis. Mosheim, i. 332.

It is not perhaps generally known, that one of the plans contemplated by Voltaire and his royal and other associates, for dis-

reign of Justinian, who erected a magnificent chur
in honour of the Virgin Mary,* the holy city flourish
the auspices and fostering care of the Christian e
but when Nushirvan, or Chosroes I, king of Persia,
Syria, he contemplated its siege, although he died
making the attempt.†

During Justinian's reign the Jews were exposed to

crediting and overturning the Christian faith, was to r
attempt of Julian.—"You probably know that, at thi
time, there is in Berlin one of the circumcised, who,
Mahomet's paradise, is in the mean time gone to wait on
mer disciple, in the name of the sultan Mustapha. Writi
country (Prussia) the other day, I mentioned, that if the k
but say the word, it would be a fine opportunity to have t
of Jerusalem rebuilt."—D'Alembert to Voltaire. "I have
but that we should have succeeded in *our negociation* for the
ing of the temple of the Jews, if your former disciple (F
had not been afraid of losing some *circumcised* worthies, w
have carried away thirty or forty millions with them."—D'
to Voltaire. "If your majesty is in a regular correspond
Ali Bey, I implore your protection with him; I have a *lit*
to ask f him. It is to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, and
the Jews, who will pay him a large tribute, and thereby
mighty lord of him."—Voltaire to the empress Catharine.
i. 192—194.

It appears very extraordinary that several commenta

persecution, by being compelled to keep Easter at the same time as the Christians.* And in this reign also, the vessels of the temple were brought from Africa to Constantinople, by the Roman general Belisarius.†

Chosroes II., however, succeeded in that object in the reign of Heraclius, and with the aid of twenty-six thousand infuriated Jews, after subduing Galilee and the region beyond Jordan, reduced Jerusalem itself, destroying the sepulchre of Christ, and the churches of Helena and Constantine by fire; and the patriarch Zachariah, with the *true cross*, were carried captive into Persia, and ninety thousand Christians massacred by the Jews and Arabs.‡

Many of the Jews, who from time to time had been driven from their own city and country, and especially during the wars of Titus and Adrian, had settled in Arabia, where they had erected synagogues in the cities, and castles in the wilderness;§ but the impostor Mahomet having in vain solicited them to acknowledge him as a true prophet, he became their most implacable enemy. Being called upon either to acknowledge him or to fight, the unhappy wanderers exclaimed "Alas we are ignorant of the use of arms, but we persevere in the faith and worship of our fathers; why wilt thou reduce us to the necessity of a just defence?" They were soon subdued by the fell impostor, their riches confiscated, their arms were seized and turned against themselves; a wretched colony of seven hundred exiles was driven with their wives and children, to implore a refuge on the confines of Syria; and a still more hapless multitude of a like number, were dragged in chains to the market place of Medina, and forced alive into a grave prepared for their simultaneous execution and burial.‖

* Gibb. viii. 322. † Gibb. vii. 194. ‡ Gibb. viii. 221.
§ Gibb. ix. 251. ‖ Gibb. ix. 303, 304.

After the great battle of Yermuk, wherein Manuel, the general of Heraclius, and Jabalah, an Arabian prince, were defeated by Abu Obeidah, the Saracens undertook the siege of Jerusalem, where that commander thus addressed the citizens of Ælia, as the holy city was known to the besiegers. "Health and happiness to every one that follows the right way! We require of you to testify that there is one God, and Mahomet is his apostle. If you refuse this, consent to pay tribute, and be under us forthwith. Otherwise I shall bring men against you, who love death better than you do the drinking of wine, or eating of hog's flesh. Nor will I ever stir from you, if it please God, till I have destroyed those that fight for you, and made slaves of your children." Jerusalem capitulated, but the patriarch Sophronius stipulated that the articles of security should be ratified, by the authority and presence of Omar himself. The question was debated in the council of Medina; the sanctity of the place, and the advice of Ali, persuaded the caliph to gratify the wishes of his soldiers and enemies; and the simplicity of his journey is more illustrious, than the royal pageants of vanity and oppression. The conqueror of Persia and Syria was mounted on a red camel, which carried, besides his person, a bag of corn, a bag of dates, a wooden dish, and a leathern bottle of water. Wherever he halted, the company, without distinction, was invited to partake of his homely fare, and the repast was consecrated by the prayer and exhortation of the commander of the faithful. But in this expedition or pilgrimage, his power was exercised in the administration of justice; he reformed the licentious polygamy of the Arabs, relieved the tributaries from extortion and cruelty, and chastised the luxury of the Saracens, by despoiling them of their rich silks, and dragging them on their faces in the dirt. When he came within sight of Jerusalem, the caliph cried with a loud voice, "God is victorious. O Lord, give us an easy conquest;" and pitching his tent of coarse hair, calmly

seated himself on the ground. After signing the capitulation, he entered the city without fear or precaution; and courteously discoursed with the patriarch concerning its religious antiquities. Sophronius bowed before his new master, and secretly muttered in the words of Daniel, "The abomination of desolation is in the holy place."* At the hour of prayer they stood together in the church of the resurrection; but the caliph refused to perform his devotions, and contented himself with praying on the steps of the church of Constantine. To the patriarch he disclosed his prudent and honourable motive. "Had I yielded," said Omar, "to your request, the moslems of a future age would have infringed the treaty, under colour of imitating my example." By his command the ground of the temple of Solomon was prepared for the foundation of a mosch; and during a residence of ten days, he regulated the present and future state of his Syrian conquests.†

The next siege which Jerusalem was destined to sustain was by the Seljukian‡ Turks, who in the year 1076 dislodged the Fatimite Caliphs, and retained possession of the holy city for twenty years,§ when they were expelled by the Caliph of Egypt, who then recovered its dominion.‖

A wild and enthusiastic feeling, mingled with much

* Dan. xii. 11.

† Gibb. ix. 411—414. Guth. vi. 118.

‡ As to who they were, and their conflicts amongst the various dynasties and tribes of the Mahometan superstition, as well as the divisions of the caliphate, and the rise and fall of the various Musselman dynasties, may be seen and traced in Guthrie, vii. 343., and Gibb. x. 345—368., and various other writers. They are called Seljukian, Seljeuciddian, or Selzuccian; and their original progenitor was a Turcoman of the name of Saljuez; and from him it is more than probable, that the whole race of the modern pure Turks hav e descended. Vertot's Knights of Malta, i. 16. 316.

§ Gibb. x. 383. ‖ Gibb. xi. 77. Guth. vii. 59.

hypocrisy and iniquity, gave rise to the crusades, which commencing in the eleventh and ending in the thirteenth century, deluged the shores and plains of Asia with blood, and drained entire Europe of her men and treasure.*

In one of these successful expeditions, Godfrey of Boulogne and his companions wrested Jerusalem out the hands of the Caliphate, after an obstinate siege, when the crusaders forgetting the command of their own divine lawgiver, stained their victory by an indiscriminate and ruthless effusion of human blood, as well Jewish as Mahometan.†

The usurper Saladin having recovered the possession of this often contested city,‡ Richard I. (the English Cœur de Lion), notwithstanding his valour and chivalry, was unable to retake it, and was glad to compromise with Saladin for free egress for the Christians to the holy sepulchre, without tribute;§ and although the emperor Frederick II. (notwithstanding the vindictive treachery of Innocent III.) obtained from Al Camel, the reigning sultan, the restitution of Jerusalem, of Bethlehem and Nazareth, and of Tyre and Sidon;‖ about twenty

* Gibb. xi. 1—163.

† Gibb. xi. 61. ‡ Gibb. xi. 138.

§ Gibb. xi. 156. Guth. 183.

‖ Gibb. xi. 157. Frederick having left orders with his generals, before he set out from *Europe*, to invade the pope's territories, which had been obeyed with great success and some marks of cruelty, this exasperated his holiness so much, that he excommunicated *Frederick*, and sent orders to all his ecclesiastics in the east, and the masters of the three great military orders, the Knights of St. John, the Knights Hospitallers, and the Teutonic Knights, not to obey him. *Camel* was informed of this before Frederick was, but he preserved his usual moderation. His answer to *Frederick's* ambassadors was, that his conscience and religion led him to have as great a veneration as the Christians had for the city of Jerusalem; and, therefore, he could not give it up; and that his imperial majesty must, by a fresh embassy, make new proposals. *Camel* accompanied this answer with presents

years afterwards, the holy city was taken and pillaged by the Conizmians,* or Khowarazmians.†

In 1263 Bendocdan,‡ one of the Mameluke sultans of Egypt, ravaged the Holy Land and committed violent devastations; and the Christian dominion was entirely put an end to by his successors, in 1291;§ and Selim I. having reduced Syria and Egypt under his authority in 1517,‖ both Jews and Christians have ever since been alike subject to the Mahometan yoke, and which both nations have found a yoke of iron indeed.

But shall it always be so? Certainly not: the prophecies which point to the restoration of the Jews¶ must and will be accomplished, more or less literally, and Jerusalem shall yet be made a praise in the earth.**

A dawn of this interesting event, connected as it is with the highest hopes and best feelings of the devout Christian, was seen in the Callenberg institution established at Halle, in Germany, by the late Professor Frank.††

of an elephant, and the most curious animals his country produced; and *Frederick* sent him other ambassadors. Guth. vii. 234.

It would seem, that upon the footing of this treaty, the possession of Jerusalem by the Mahometans, and the toleration of the Christians still rests. See Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem. Bp. of Clogher's Journal from Cairo to Mount Sinai, and Jolliffe's Letters from Palestine.

* Gibb. xi. 158. † Guth. vii. 237. 183. Vertot, i. 319.

‡ Jolliffe's Letters, 73. Chateaubriand calls him Bibans-bondochdari.—Itineraire, ii. 69. Vertot's Knights of Malta, i. 342.

§ Jolliffe's Letters, 73. Chat. Itin. ii. 69.

‖ Jolliffe's Letters, 74. Chat. Itin. ii. 74. Vertot, iii. 154. Guth. vii. 123—134. Thornton's Turkey, lxxxiii—xciii.

¶ See them collected by Dr. Thomas Burnett, De Futura Judæorum Restauratione, Faber on the Restoration of the Jews, London, 1809, and Keith's Evidence from Prophecy, App. No. ii. and see note at the end of p. 547.

** Is. lxii. 7. †† See Jewish Repository, for June 1813, p. 250.

A still more brilliant light* was exhibited in the year 1808, when British Christians, *of all denominations*, laying aside their distinctive peculiarities, joined hand and heart to establish a society for the *conversion, instruction, employment*, and *encouragement* of the Jews, and for translating the New Testament into Hebrew.

This light was shining brighter and steadier, when it was for a season blasted in the bud, by the withering hand of caprice and bigotry; and the wonderful discovery was made, that episcopalians could not conscientiously co-operate with dissenters, even in an attempt to convert the Jews, although they all believed alike in the Messiahship of Jesus,—or rather it was weakly imagined, that it was *expedient* the society should be placed *exclusively* under the fostering care of dignified prelates. To ensure, therefore, that object, pious dissenters of all denominations were to be thrust out from the society, or somehow or other got rid of; and thus, in the year 1815, were sacrificed Christian principle, and the most solemn sanctions and obligations, at the shrine of that very GODDESS OF EXPEDIENCY, other votaries of whom have more recently violated the British constitution, and broken down the bulwarks of the reformation itself. The miserable, shortsighted policy, however, of the one party, as well as of the other, has been but too evidently manifested in the result, by their mutual discomfiture: *the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, has dwindled into comparative insignificance, and Ireland is little less than in open rebellion.*

Much more than this could the editor say; but retaining the same regard for that great object, WHICH HE ORIGINATED AND FOUNDED HIMSELF, as he ever had, and in the fullest

* The principal tract published by the Callenberg institution was called "*The Light in the Evening.*"

confidence that it will eventually be accomplished* by Jehovah himself, in spite of the narrow prejudices, shortsightedness, and inefficient plans of miserable man; he leaves the

* Amongst all the extraordinary events which have taken place during the present century, the following notifications may be considered as possessing no little interest.—On the 11th of February, 1831, the sultan issued a decree, that "Greeks, Armenians, Armenian Catholics, and Jews, shall henceforth, in common with the Turks or Mussulmen, be equal before the law. No Mussulman shall in future have any preference, or enjoy any superior rights, in consequence of his being a Mussulman; for according to the opinion of the sultan, all form but one family, but one body, whatever may be the private creed of each of his subjects, which is a matter that only concerns the conscience of man; who cannot be called to account for his religion to ANY BUT TO GOD. As to the government of the sultan, it will not, under any circumstances, consider what is the religion of the person who presents himself before it."—Keith's Signs of the Times, vol. i. 42., by which document, that acute writer observes, "the vicegerent of the prophet has virtually abjured his faith." The Augsburg Gazette of the 20th Oct. contains the following firman, published by Ibrahim Pacha on taking possession of Jerusalem:—"Jerusalem possesses ancient monuments, which are visited by Christians and Jews from all countries. But these pilgrims have cause to complain of the heavy impositions laid upon them by the road. As I am desirous of putting an end to this abuse, I command all Mussulmans of the pachaliks of Saide, as well as of the districts of Jerusalem, Tripoli, and all the provinces bordering on the Mediterranean, to suppress all impositions on every road and every place without exception. I also command that the Christian priests, attached to the churches in which the Gospel is taught, shall in future be exempt from the arbitrary charges to which they have been subject." Times, October 27, 1832.

Is not this a strong indication that HE, who has all hearts in his hands, is at one and the same time, inclining both the rival representatives of the false prophet, to favour Christianity and the return of his ancient people?

event in the hands of HIM who knows how to bring good
of evil, and to overrule all events so as to promote his
glory.*

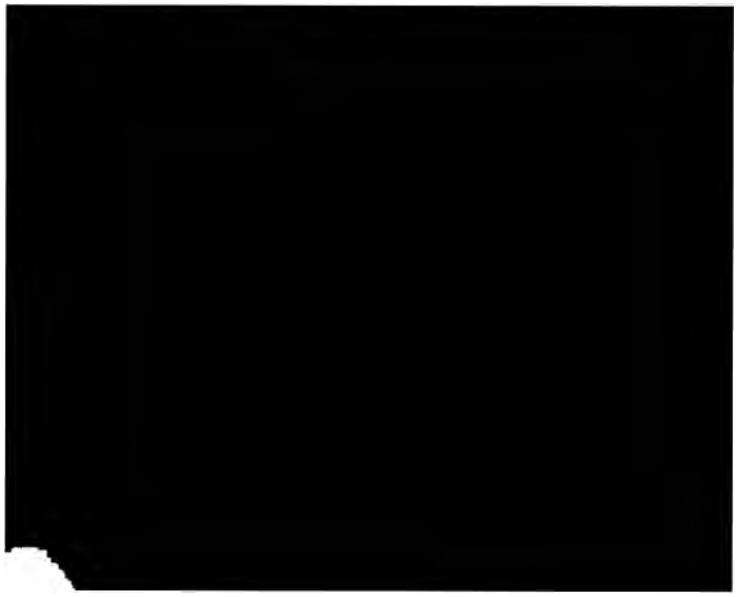
NOTA.—The following are some of the numerous texts of Scrip
pointing to the restoration of Judah and Israel.

As to the restoration of the Jews to their own land.

Deut. xxx. 1—5.
Isaiah, xiv. 1, 2.
Jer. xxxi. 4—12.
Jer. xxxii. 37—41.
Jer. xxxiii. 7—11.
Ezek. xi. 15—20.
Ezek. xxxiv. 11—15.
Ezek. xxxvi. 8—36.
Ezek. xxxix. 25—29.

As to the union of Judah and Israel, and one king to reign over t

Isaiah, xi. 10—13.
Jer. iii. 17, 18
Jer. xxiii. 3—8.
Jer. xxx.
Jer. xxxiii. 12—26.
Ezek. xxxvii. 15—28.
Hos. i. 10, 11.
Zech. viii. ix. 12—17. x.
xii. 6, 7. xiv.
Mic. iv. 1—8. compared
Zeph. iii. 14—20. and
Ezek. xxxiv. 16. 23, to e



THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

It is most usual to date the establishment of this kingdom, as separate from that of Judah, from the revolt of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and the ten tribes, in the first year of the reign of Rehoboam. That separation, however, actually commenced upon the death of Saul, when Abner, the son of Ner, and who had been captain of Saul's host, took Ish-bosheth, that monarch's son, then forty years of age, and brought him over to Mahanaim, on the east side of the river Jordan, and made him king over Gilead, the Ashurites, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and all Israel.* Ish-bosheth appears to have remained in the quiet possession of his authority for the space of two years, undisturbed by David, who had sworn to Saul that he would not cut off his seed after him, nor destroy his name out of his father's house.†

Upon the death of Saul, the house of Judah had submitted to David, and anointed him king over them in Hebron,‡ which was on the west side of Jordan; and fully adhering to the oath which he had taken, David does not appear to have contemplated any attack upon Ish-bosheth, but to have waited patiently for such directions as God might condescend to give him. Abner, however, imagining that Ish-bosheth was now

* 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9. † 1 Sam. xxiv. 21, 22.
‡ 2 Sam. ii. 4.

of Ish-bosheth. By the prudence and valour
whom David entrusted the management of the
waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of
weaker and weaker. And Ish-bosheth having offe
on account of one of Saul's concubines, the lat
from him and joined himself to David, but was soo
assassinated by Joab.

The death of Abner is said to have filled Ish-bos
Israel with apprehension, a feeling, however, fo
thing related by the sacred historian enables us to a
however that may be, it proved the dissolution of
Saul, for Baanah and Rechab, of the children of Be
who were captains of bands to Ish-bosheth, assas
prince whilst he was resting on his bed in the heat
and having cut off his head, they escaped and c
David in Hebron. That monarch, however, gave
different reception from what they expected, fo
rewarding them for their treachery and villany,
ately consigned them both to an ignominious deat

Ish-bosheth reigned over Israel about seven
whole, and upon his death the tribes of Israel wer
in Hebron, and submitted to his authority; and a
of Israel anointed him king over them.

JEROBOAM I.

A.C. 975. THIS prince was, no doubt, well prepared to seize upon the throne, in consequence of the intimation given to him by Ahijah the prophet,* at the close of the reign of Solomon. He, nevertheless, assumed at first the appearance of moderation and remonstrance; for having been called out of Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon,† he, with all the congregation of Israel, repaired to Shechem in Ephraim, where Rehoboam had gone to be proclaimed king, and thus addressed the new monarch, Rehoboam; "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now, therefore, make thou the grievous service of thy father and his heavy yoke which he put upon us lighter, and we will serve thee."‡ Rehoboam having unhappily rejected the advice of his father's aged counsellors, and adopted the rash suggestions of his own youthful companions, answered the people rashly, and said unto them; "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."§

When all Israel saw that Rehoboam hearkened not unto them, they cried, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel; now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.‖

Rehoboam having sent Adoram, who was over the tribute, to quell the insurrection, the people stoned him: upon which

* 1 Kings, xi. 29—32.

† 1 Kings, xi. 40. xii. 2. 2 Chron. x. 2.

‡ 1 Kings, xii. 4. 2 Chron. x. 4.

§ 1 Kings, xii. 14, 15 2 Chron. x. 14. See p.136.

‖ 1 Kings, xii. 16, 17. 2 Chron. x. 16, 17.

out from thence and built Penuel; and fearing
should return to the house of David if they conti
to the house of Jehovah, at Jerusalem, to sacrifi
two calves‡ of gold, and persuading the people t
much for them to go up to Jerusalem, said to the
thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of
he set one in Beth-el, and the other in Dan. A
became a sin, for the people went to worship be
even unto Dan. And he made an house of hig
made priests of the lowest of the people, which
the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a

* 1 Kings, xii. 18—20. The Septuagint has it, exce
Judah and Benjamin.

† "This piece of false policy was the ruin of Je
family; which, had he trusted in God, and not in hi
would have been established in the kingdom! This w
consequence of forsaking the Lord, and *acting by reaso*
gave the ten tribes timely notice that the worship la
not pleasing to him; which they ought to have take
not to have joined in the service on account of wo
fear of persecution from their new king; to whom, th
him the temporal power, he did not give him the po
religion established by God himself; and the doing
ruin of his family, and for which he is signally brande
Bp. Wilson on 1 Kings, xiii.

eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Beth-el, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made; and he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Beth-el, the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart, and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel, and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.*

Jehovah, however, seldom leaves himself without a witness† in the midst of midnight darkness, in order that the wicked may be left without excuse, and every mouth stopped before God.‡ Thus before the judgments were to fall upon Jeroboam and his posterity, God saw fit to warn him by a special indication of his divine displeasure. For this purpose he sent a man of God, a prophet, from Judah unto Beth-el, and whilst Jeroboam stood by the altar which he had lately erected there to burn incense, the prophet bore this direct testimony against the altar and all who were connected with it; "O altar, altar, thus saith Jehovah; behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee." And he gave a sign the same day, saying; This is the sign which Jehovah hath spoken; behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.§

Jeroboam enraged at this proceeding, stretched out his hand and cried to his people, to lay hold of the man of God. Then it was that Jehovah exhibited his power and majesty, for the hand of Jeroboam was dried up, so that he could not draw it to him again, but remained a visible monument to

* 1 Kings, xii. 25—33. † Acts, xiv. 17.
‡ Rom. iii. 19. § 1 Kings, xiii. 1—3.

Partially affected by this judgment and miracle,
asked the prophet to intreat the face of Jehovah, his
pray for him, that his hand might be restored to h
and the man of God besought Jehovah, and the ki
was restored to him again, and became as it was b

The sacred writer informs us, that God had
charged the prophet that he should eat no bread,
water during his absence, nor return home by the
that he went; and the melancholy result shews ho
a thing it is to disobey the commands of the
heaven and earth, "round about whom are clouds
ness, and the habitation of whose throne are rig
and judgment."‡

Accordingly, to a solicitation from Jeroboam t
with him and refresh himself, and accept a r
returned the most positive refusal, grounded
commandment of his God, and set out on his r
Beth-el to Judah by another way, and so far all was
there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el, whose s
informed him of the transactions of the man of
Judah, he was anxious to see him, and having s
ass, went after him and found him sitting under an
upon the ground of his being a prophet like himse
pretended vision of an angel, he overcame his scr

The power of God was now displayed, for the old prophet of Beth-el was constrained to become himself the messenger of divine wrath upon the man of God, for that very offence which he had himself induced him to commit; "And it came to pass as they sat at the table, that the word of Jehovah came unto the prophet that brought him back: and he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying; Thus saith Jehovah, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of Jehovah, and hast not kept the commandment which Jehovah thy God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which Jehovah did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water, thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers." And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him, and his carcass was cast in the way; and the ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the carcass. And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcass cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcass; and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God who was disobedient unto the word of Jehovah; therefore, Jehovah hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of Jehovah, which he spake unto him. And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass, and they saddled him. And he went and found his carcass cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcass: the lion had not eaten the carcass, nor torn the ass. And the prophet took up the carcass of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city to mourn and to bury him. And he laid his car-

lay my bones beside his bones: for the saying whi
by the word of Jehovah against the altar in Be
against all the houses of the high places which
cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.*

It might have been expected that so signal an i
the divine judgment would have induced the
monarch to retrace his steps; but so far from tha
his sons had cast off the Levites from executing t
office unto Jehovah, made the lowest of his people
the high places, and for the devils† and for the cal
he had made, and in fact consecrated for that sac
whoever was willing to undertake it. And THI
became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut
to destroy it from off the face of the earth.§

* 1 Kings, xiii. 11—32.

† Idols resembling goats. Anselm Bayley on 2 Chron. x
see Lev. xvii. 17.

‡ "The cherubim of the temple and the calves of Dan a
were both hieroglyphical figures. The one, of God's i
the other, of man's, in direct contravention of the second
ment. The cherub was a compound figure; the calf, sin
boam, therefore, and his subjects were unitarians. An
descendants added to the idolatry of the calves, the worsh
they became materialists. For the most ancient pagan id

Wonderful is the mercy and forbearance of God, even towards hardened impenitents; for notwithstanding the late conduct of Jeroboam, which might well have deserved a devouring fire from the presence of Jehovah, another judgment was inflicted upon him as a warning to forsake his sin, in the visitation of his son Abijah with a sore sickness.

Although Jeroboam well knew that he had forsaken God, and was still persisting in a course of iniquitous rebellion to the divine majesty, yet, as when his arm was withered, so now that he apprehended the loss of a beloved child, he was well aware that there was only one throne of grace, to which he could apply in the hour of necessity. He did not therefore apply to any of his own priests, or offer up burnt offerings on his own altars in Beth-el or Dan, but sent his wife in disguise to Shiloh, with a present to Ahijah the prophet, who had foretold his exaltation, in order to ascertain whether the child should live or die.

Notwithstanding the venerable prophet was blind from old age, being forewarned of God, he immediately knew Jeroboam's wife, and thus addressed her, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam, Why feignest thou thyself to be another? For I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes; but hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the

feet enter into the city, the child shall die. An
shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of
shall come to the grave, because in him there is f
good thing, toward Jehovah, the God of Israel, in th
Jeroboam. Moreover, Jehovah shall raise him
over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam
but what? even now. For Jehovah shall smite I
reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Is
this good land which he gave to their fathers, and
ter them beyond the river, because they have m
groves, provoking Jehovah to anger. And he
Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who di
who made Israel to sin. And Jeroboam's wife
departed, and came to Tirzah; and when she ca
threshold of the door, the child died; and they bu
and all Israel mourned for him.*

But Jeroboam was soon destined to experience
cided proof of God's wrath, and which no doubt a
him a fulfilment of the denunciation of Ahijah;
having been wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboa
lives,† on the death of the former, Abijah,‡ his s
bled an army of four hundred thousand chosen
Jeroboam prepared double that number, mighty me

and its leader; "Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel; ought ye not to know that Jehovah, the God of Israel, gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon, the son of David, is risen up and hath rebelled against his lord. And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted, and could not withstand them. And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of Jehovah in the hand of the sons of David; and ye be a great multitude, and there are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods. Have ye not cast out the priests of Jehovah, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of other lands? so that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, the same may be a priest of them that are no gods. But as for us, Jehovah is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests which minister unto Jehovah, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business; and they burn unto Jehovah, every morning and every evening, burnt sacrifices and sweet incense; the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table, and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening, for we keep the charge of Jehovah, our God; but ye have forsaken him. And behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against Jehovah, the God of your fathers, for ye shall not prosper."*

Jeroboam endeavoured to avail himself of this delay, by planting an ambuscade behind the Jewish army, so that

* 2 Chron. xiii. 4—12.

Abijah found the Israelites in great force, both in his f
and rear, and the battle raged all round them. In
dilemma, the host of Judah cried unto Jehovah, and the pr
sounded with the trumpets; and as the men of Judah ga
shout, God smote Jeroboam and all Israel, and they fled b
Judah: and God delivered them into their hand.
Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter
there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand ch
men. Thus the children of Israel were brought under at
time, and the children of Judah prevailed because they re
upon Jehovah, the God of their fathers. And Abijah pur
after Jeroboam and took cities from him; Bethel, with
towns thereof, and Jeshanah, with the towns thereof,
Ephraim with the towns thereof. Neither did Jerob
recover strength again in the days of Abijah.*

Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years over the ten tr
of Israel, when God struck him, and he died, and he s
with his fathers,† and was suceeded by his son,

[redacted]

BAASHA.

A. C. 954. IMMEDIATELY after this monarch assumed the royal authority, he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying which Jehovah spake by his servant Ahijah, the Shilonite, because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and made Israel sin, by his provocation, wherewith he provoked Jehovah, the God of Israel, to anger.*

The international war continued between the houses of Judah and Israel all the reign of this monarch, during which Baasha came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa, king of Judah.†

Being sore pressed, however, by the king of Israel, Asa formed a league with Benhadad, king of Syria, who then resided at Damascus, and prevailed on that monarch to invade the cities of Israel, Ijon, Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali; upon which Baasha desisted from his purpose of building Ramah, and withdrew his army, when Asa demolished the place and carried away the stones of Ramah and the timber thereof, and therewith built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.‡ It was probably upon this occasion that Asa dug the pit or trench which is spoken of by the prophet Jeremiah.§

Baasha having reigned twenty-four years over Israel, and done evil in the sight of Jehovah, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, the word of Jehovah came to Jehu,

* 1 Kings, xv. 29, 30.

† 2 Chron. xvi. 1. The reason of which was, lest his subjects should return to their allegiance, to the house of Judah.

‡ 2 Chron. xvi. 2—6. 1 Kings, xv. 17—22.

§ Jer. xli. 9. A. Clarke says it was so, and that it was a cistern or reservoir for water, for the supply of the place.

the son of Hanani,* against him, saying; Forasmuc I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince ove people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jerob and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to a with their sins: behold, I will take away the posteri Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will mak house like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. Hin dieth of Baasha in the city, shall the dogs eat; and him dieth of his in the fields, shall the fowls of the air eat.†

Soon after this denunciation, Baasha slept wit fathers, and was buried in Tirzah, where he had a kept his court;‡ and was succeeded by his son,§

ELAH.

A. C. 930. This monarch was completely vicious, and h reigned only two years, was assassinated, whils state of intoxication, at the house of Arza, his ste at Tirzah, by Zimri, one of his officers, who usurpe

his master, he did evil in the sight of Jehovah by walking in the way of Jeroboam.* The Israelites were besieging Gibbethon, in the lot of Dan, but then in the possession of the Philistines, at the time that Zimri slew Elah; and when the troops heard of that transaction, they immediately elected Omri, the general who commanded the besieging army, and made him king over Israel on the spot. Immediately after which, Omri broke up the siege and marched with his troops to besiege Zimri in the royal palace at Tirzah. And when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he set fire to the palace and was consumed in the conflagration which ensued.†

OMRI

A. C. 929. Did not establish himself in the throne of Israel without some difficulty, for the nation became divided, and one half of them wished to make Tibni, the son of Ginath, their king; but Omri having succeeded in defeating his competitor, was, by his death, confirmed in the throne.‡

After reigning six years in Tirzah, he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver, and erected thereon a city which he named Samaria, after Shemer the former proprietor.§ Having reigned six years longer in Samaria, and during the whole time wrought evil in the eyes

* 1 Kings, xvi. 19. † 1 Kings, xvi. 16—18.

‡ 1 Kings, xvi. 21, 22.

§ 1 Kings, xvi. 23, 24. See also Wilson's Travels, vol. i. 376. and see A. Clarke (in loco) as to the actual name (Shomer) and the site and history of this place.

Of this prince it is recorded that he d
A. C. 925. sight of Jehovah, above all that were befo
that, as if it had been a light thing for hi
the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, he
Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal,‡ king of th
and went and served Baal, and worshipped him
up an altar for Baal, in the house of Baal, which
in Samaria. He also made a grove, and did mo
Jehovah, the God of Israel, to anger, than all
Israel that were before him.§

The prophet Elijah, whom we now read of
time, was sent to denounce to Ahab that there
famine in Israel, and that there should be neit
rain until he besought Jehovah for it.‖ The
immediately sent by God to the brook Cherith, b

* This monarch was—1. An idolater in principle.
in practice. 3. He led the people to idolatry by *precep*
And 4. Which was that in he did worse than all before
statutes in favour of idolatry, and obliged the peo
commit it: Micah. vi. 16.

† 1 Kings, xvi. 25—28.

‡ Ethbaal or Ithobalus, king of Tyre, who had b

where he was miraculously provided by ravens* with bread and flesh twice in the day, and drank from the brook.†

The brook having dried up through want of rain, God directed the prophet to travel to Zarephath,‡ which belonged to Zidon, where he had commanded a widow woman to sustain him. So far from this poor woman being provided with any human means of supplying the necessities of Elijah, he found her and an only child, suffering the extremity of want and deprivation through the famine; for she said, As Jehovah, thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse, and behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. But Elijah said to her, Fear not; go, and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that Jehovah sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of Jehovah, which he spake by Elijah.§

The genuine servants of God are sure to carry a blessing with them wherever they go; and those who shew them kind-

* I retain the common idea according to our translation, although I am not ignorant that A. Clarke and others incline to the opinion that not ravens, or birds of any kind, but the Orbim, or the inhabitants of a place called Orbo, are intended.—A. Clarke in loco.

† 1 Kings, xvii. 2—7.

‡ Now Sarphas; Mr. Maundrell, who visited it, describes it as consisting of a few houses only, on the tops of the mountains. It lies between Tyre and Zidon.

§ 1 Kings, xvii. 8—16.

ness, although unconsciously, seldom fail of reaping a rich reward. If this widow had not afforded shelter to the prophet, most probably she and her son would have perished like the thousands of victims whom this famine destroyed; but now her barrel of meal wasted not, nor did her cruse of oil fail. Her son, however, fell sick, and died; and the widow, who seemed conscious of some secret sin,* thought the death of her son was a judgment from God. But Elijah restored her child by a miracle, when his mother in the language of grateful faith exclaimed, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of Jehovah in thy mouth is truth.†

The famine had now lasted three years, and the country was no doubt reduced to the last extremity, for the famine was very sore.‡ God had concealed the prophet Elijah at that time, as well probably to prevent any applications to him for relief, as to screen him from the persecution of Ahab and Jezebel, for it seems clear that for some purpose or other Ahab had made every exertion to discover him.§ Now, however, Jehovah commanded the prophet to shew himself unto Ahab, and he would send rain upon the earth. Man's extremity is always God's opportunity; and thus it proved in the present instance, for this command was given just at the time when Ahab, in the utmost anxiety, had called Obadiah the governor of his house, and said to him; Go into the land unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks, peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.‖

Although a courtier and in the service of Ahab, Obadiah was a good man, and feared Jehovah greatly; and which he

* 1 Kings, xvii. 18. † 1 Kings, xvii. 17—24.
‡ 1 Kings, xviii. 1. § 1 Kings, xviii. 10.
‖ 1 Kings, xviii. 1—5.

fully exemplified by secreting one hundred and fifty of the prophets of Jehovah in a cave, and feeding them with bread and water at a moment of severe persecution, when Jezebel, the Zidonian wife of Ahab, was persecuting and destroying them throughout the land.*

It was the will of God that Elijah should first of all encounter Obadiah, who immediately fell on his face exclaiming, Art thou that my lord Elijah? thereby testifying his respect alike for his person and character. Elijah having ordered him, with the authority of a prophet of God, to go and tell Ahab, Behold Elijah is here! Obadiah was alarmed and said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hands of Ahab, to slay me? As Jehovah, thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of Jehovah shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me; but I thy servant fear Jehovah from my youth.†

Elijah having solemnly declared that it was his purpose to shew himself to Ahab upon that occasion, Obadiah laid aside his apprehensions and informed his sovereign, who immediately came to meet Elijah.‡

He came, however, in a bad spirit, for as soon as he saw him he said, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? to which the prophet indignantly replied, I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the

* 1 Kings, xviii. 3, 4.
† 1 Kings, xviii. 7—12. ‡ 1 Kings, xviii. 16.

commandments of Jehovah, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now, therefore, send and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal,* four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves,† four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.‡

Cowed by the authority of the prophet, Ahab hesitated not to comply with his command; and having assembled the nation and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, Elijah thus addressed them; How long halt ye between two opinions? If Jehovah be God follow him; but if Baal then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of Jehovah, but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them, therefore, give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of Jehovah; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves and dress it first, for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and they called on the name of Baal, from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon

* Apollo, or the Sun. † Or Venus.

‡ 1 Kings, xviii. 18, 19.

§ There was peculiar propriety in Elijah's making fire the test of his intended miracle; for as Apollo was the god of fire, a failure in producing that element in the time of need, was the best evidence of the vanity of his worship.

the altar which was made.* And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked.† And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of Jehovah that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of Jehovah came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: and with the stones he built an altar in the name of Jehovah:‡ and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock

* "A heathen priest, a high priest of Budhoo, has been just shewing me the manner in which they dance and jump up and down from side to side, twisting their bodies in all manner of ways when making their offerings to their dæmon gods; a person all the while beating furiously on a tom-tom, or drum, to excite and sustain those frantic attitudes; both at the same time imploring the succour of their god, frequently in some such language as this—"O loving brother devil, hear me, and receive my offering." To perform these sacrificial attitudes, they have persons who are taught to practise them from their earliest years, according to directions laid down in religious books; and to make the joints and body pliant, much anointing of the parts, and mechanical management, are used; and they have masters whose business it is to teach these attitudes and contortions, according to the rules laid down in those books."—A. Clarke.

† A. Clarke has made this address irony *indeed!*

‡ Both Tacitus and Suetonius make mention of an altar on mount Carmel, in the time of Vespasian, which that emperor went to consult before he was raised to the purple.—A. Clarke.

in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill fou
with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, anc
wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And
it the second time. And he said, Do it the third tim
they did it the third time. And the water ran a
altar, and he filled the trench also with water.* And
to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacri
Elijah, the prophet, came near, and said, Jehovah, th
Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this
thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, a
have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O
hear me, that this people may know that thou art Jeh
God, and that thou hast turned their heart back agai
the fire of Jehovah fell, and consumed the burnt sacri
the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licke
water that was in the trench.† And when all the pe
it, they fell on their faces: and they said, Jehovah,
God; Jehovah, he is the God. And Elijah said ur

* The pagans (who have been imitated in such trick

Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.*

After this splendid miracle, and unequivocal declaration of what had been the real cause of the late dreadful famine, it was the merciful purpose of Jehovah to avert his judgments, and afford the famished land relief; and Elijah said to Ahab; Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain; and the monarch went up to eat and to drink, most likely rejoicing in heart at the prospect of deliverance, but Elijah went up to the top of Carmel to pray.

Having commanded his servant to look toward the sea, he perceived nothing till the seventh time, when there arose a little cloud like a man's hand; upon which Elijah told him to go to Ahab, and say, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass, in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. And the hand of Jehovah was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.†

Notwithstanding the exhibitions of God's judgments, the miracle he had wrought in sending fire from heaven, and no less wonderful, though more frequent, in so mercifully sending a supply of rain, it does not appear that the heart of Ahab was at all affected; for he immediately went and related to his wife Jezebel, all that had taken place; and especially how he had slain all the prophets of Baal with the sword; when that wicked woman sent a messenger to Elijah, saying; So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.‡

* 1 Kings, xviii. 21—40. † 1 Kings, xviii. 41—46.
‡ 1 Kings, xix. 1, 2.

The prophet having thus fulfilled the object of his mission, was now permitted, by the wisdom of God, to retire again into obscurity; and in order to avoid the vengeance of Jezebel, he fled for his life to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and he left his servant there; but for greater security, himself went a day's journey into the wilderness.*

Agitated and fatigued, Elijah rested under a juniper tree, and requested that he might die, and in that repining state of mind fell asleep; when, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat, and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of Jehovah came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat, forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb,† the mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of Jehovah came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of Hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before Jehovah. And, behold, Jehovah passed by, and a great and strong wind rent

* 1 Kings, xix. 3, 4. Beersheba was the most southern extremity of the promised land.

† Jehovah intended that Elijah should visit Horeb, where Moses had fasted forty days and nights, (Exod. xxiv. 18.) that in him the miracle might be repeated; because as Moses was the lawgiver, so Elijah was in some respects the chief of the prophets. Matt. xvii. 3. Scott in 1 Kings, xix. 8. So also did Christ fast, who is himself the end of prophecy. Matt. iv. 2.

the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before Jehovah; but Jehovah was not in the wind: and after the wind, an earthquake; but Jehovah was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but Jehovah was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.* And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said; What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of Hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away. And Jehovah said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and Jehu, the son of Nimshi, shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha, the son of Shaphat, of Abel-mohelah, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael, shall Jehu slay, and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not

* "And behold the Lord was revealed—before him was a host of the angels of the wind, tearing the mountains, and breaking the rocks before the Lord; but the majesty (Shechinah) of the Lord was not in the host of the angels of the wind. And after the host of the angels of the wind, there was a host of the angels of commotion; but the majesty of the Lord was not in the host of the angels of commotion. And after the host of the angels of commotion, a fire; but the majesty of the Lord was not in the host of the angels of fire. And after the host of the angels of fire, a voice singing in silence," &c, that is, a sound with which no other sound was mingled."—Targum.

bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed* him.†

Having left Horeb Elijah met with Elisha, who was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth; and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again, for what have I done to thee? And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.‡

Benhadad, king of Syria, whose covetousness had probably been excited by the treasures he had received from Asa, king of Judah,§ and the success of whose joint expedition‖ against Baasha, king of Israel, might lead him to expect that Ahab and his kingdom would become an easy prey to him; now gathered all his host together, and with thirty-two kings under his command, went up and laid siege to Samaria, and sent messengers into the city to Ahab, saying, Thus saith Benhadad, thy silver and thy gold is mine, thy wives also, and thy children, even the goodliest are mine. To this insolent message the intimidated king of Israel replied, My lord,

* Given a kiss to him, either by applying the mouth to the idol, the image itself, or by kissing the hand to it, as said by Pliny, In adorando dextram ad osculum referimus, totum corpus circumagimus, when we worship we kiss our right hand and turn about our whole body.—Bp. Patrick apud Anselm Bayley in loco. Cicero mentions a statue of Hercules, the chin and lips of which were considerably worn by the frequent kissing of his worshippers. In Verrem.

† 1 Kings, xix. 4—18. ‡ 1 Kings, xix. 19—21.

§ 1 Kings, xv. 18. 2 Chron. xvi. 2. See p. 185.

‖ 1 Kings, xv. 21. 1 Kings, xvi. 5.

O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have;* meaning, most probably, that he was willing to become tributary to him.

The king of Syria disappointed at this submissive answer, which did not afford him any pretext for acts of violence, sent the messengers again, saying; Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children; yet I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away.†

With this demand, absolutely to surrender up all his property and subjects, Ahab was not disposed to comply; and having consulted his elders, they encouraged him to resist the tyrannical requirement. He couched, however, his refusal in temperate language; but when the Syrian monarch sent a third message, saying, The gods do so unto me and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me; Ahab firmly replied, Tell him, let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.‡

Incensed alike at the refusal and the message, Benhadad pressed forward the siege; when God, although Ahab had neglected to solicit his aid, in mercy to his people, and to punish the unhallowed boasting of the Syrian, sent a prophet to Ahab with this encouraging declaration. Hast thou seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah. And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith Jehovah, Even by the young men of the princes of the provinces.

* 1 Kings, xx. 2, 3, 4. † 1 Kings, xx. 5, 6.
‡ 1 Kings, xx. 7—11.

Then he said, Who shall order the battle? And
Thou.*

Ahab having, in this instance, followed the
God, issued from the city with two hundred a
young men of the princes of the provinces, a
seven thousand men to support them. When B
apprised of this sally, he ordered them to be
whether they came peaceably or hostilely; but
young men having seized upon and slain one o
the Syrian host took to flight, and the army of Is
them: and Benhadad, the king of Syria, escaped
with the horsemen. And the king of Israel w
smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Sy
great slaughter.†

The key stone of idolatry and false religion,
has been the idea of partially presiding deities; a
occasion the courtiers of Benhadad having per
that the Israelitish army had been preserved by

defiance of Benhadad; for there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith Jehovah, Because the Syrians have said, Jehovah is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore, will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. And they pitched one over against the other seven days. And so it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day. But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and there a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men that were left. And Benhadad fled, and came into the city, into an inner chamber.*

Alarmed at their situation, and probably with their retreat to Syria cut off, the servants of Benhadad said, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings; and, therefore, with sackcloth girded on their loins, and ropes on their heads, they went to Ahab and said, "Thy servant Benhadad saith, I pray thee, let me live."†

Without ascribing his late victories to the miraculous interference of Jehovah, or making any attempt to glorify him to these idolatrous heathens, or inquiring of God what was his will respecting Benhadad, he readily received their embassy; and asking if he was yet alive, declared him to be his brother.‡

The ambassadors were glad enough to re-echo the expression, and repeat, Thy brother, Benhadad! upon which Ahab desired them to fetch him; and, upon his arrival, received

* 1 Kings, xx. 28—30.

† In the same manner did Eustace de St. Pierre and his five brave companions present themselves before Edward III. at the siege of Calais, in the year 1346.—Froissart. And see similar occurrences in the East, collected by Burder, O. C. 400.

‡ 1 Kings, xx. 31, 32.

him into his chariot; and they made a covenant together that Benhadad should restore all the cities which his father had taken from the father of Ahab; and that Ahab should be at liberty to make streets in Damascus, the same as Benhadad's father had made in Samaria; and having made this covenant, Ahab sent him away.*

To shew Ahab his sins, and to express the divine displeasure, another prophet was sent to Ahab, who, having disguised himself, said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and behold a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man; if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver. And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, so shall thy judgment be, thyself hast decided it. And he hasted, and took the ashes from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him that he was of the prophets. And he said unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria,† not exhibiting the least symptom of contrition.

It is, however, to be observed, that to much of his wickedness Ahab was stimulated by his idolatrous queen, whose heart seems to have been thoroughly vicious; and thus as to the fraud, perjury, and murder, which was perpetrated respecting Naboth's vineyard, the next transaction recorded in this reign, Jezebel was the active and instrumental, although Ahab was the passive agent.

Naboth, the Jezreelite, possessed a vineyard near to the palace of Ahab, which the monarch was desirous of having

* 1 Kings, xx. 34. † 1 Kings, xx. 35—43.

for a garden of herbs, offering, either to purchase it for its value, or to give him a better vineyard for it.

It would seem, at first sight, that Naboth would have acted both prudently and loyally if he had complied with his sovereign's wishes; but it must be recollected that Jehovah himself had commanded every Israelite, "The land shall not be sold for ever;"* and Naboth, therefore, who by this very act shews himself to have lived in the fear of God, exclaimed with just abhorrence, "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee."†

Ahab returned to his house heavy and displeased, and laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread;‡ nor does he appear to have contemplated any act of violence or persecution against Naboth. But as soon as Jezebel perceived the cause of his melancholy, after first taunting him for not having the spirit to gratify his wishes by playing the tyrant, she took upon herself the task of obtaining the vineyard for him; without the slightest remorse, therefore, and by the suborning of two false witnesses, she procured a sentence of death against Naboth, for blasphemy against God and the king; and he was stoned to death. It is not said whether Ahab was acquainted with the proceedings till after Naboth was slain; but, however that may be, as soon as Jezebel informed him of it and at her invitation, he came and took possession of the vineyard.§

It rarely happens that God permits property which has been unjustly acquired to be quietly enjoyed, and it was not likely that such a flagrant atrocity as this would be allowed to pass unnoticed. Accordingly, Elijah was immediately sent by God to Ahab, who immediately anticipated the object of the visit and said, Hast thou found me, O mine

* Lev. xxv. 23. † 1 Kings xxi. 3.
‡ 1 Kings, xxi. 4. § 1 Kings, xxi. 5—16.

enemy? And the prophet answered, I have found the
because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight
Jehovah. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will ta
away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab every ma
and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will ma
thine house like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Neb
and like the house of Baasha, the son of Ahijah, for the pr
vocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, an
made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel also spake Jehova
saying; The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezre
Him that dieth of Ahab in the city, the dogs shall eat; an
him that dieth of Ahab in the field, shall the fowls of the
eat.*

But here again is the forbearing mercy of God illustrate
for when Ahab heard these words, having rent his cloth
and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lain in sac
cloth, and went softly; Jehovah declared to Elijah, Se
thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because h
humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in h
days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon h
house.†

Notwithstanding the covenant made by Benhadad, as so
as he obtained his liberty, he neglected to fulfil the co
ditions; but Ahab had not prosecuted the war, and, therefo
there had been a deceitful peace between the nations f
three years. But Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, whose s
Jehoram had married Athaliah, one of the daughters
Ahab,‡ having arrived at the court of Samaria on a vi
Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and f
the people that he had with him.§

Ahab took advantage of this visit, and of the simplic

* 1 Kings, xxi. 20—24. † 1 Kings, xxi. 27—29.
‡ 2 Kings, viii. 18. 2 Chron. xviii. 1. § 2 Chron. xviii. 2.

of Jehoshaphat's character, to prevail upon the Jewish monarch to go up with him against Ramoth Gilead, and recover it out of the hands of the king of Syria.*

Jehoshaphat, however, desired that an inquiry should first be made at the word of Jehovah; at which, probably, Ahab and his queen Jezebel expressed as much surprise as the mass of professing Christians would, if any pious servant of God in our day, was to propose to ask the solemn blessing of heaven, on undertaking a journey. Out of civility to his royal guest, Ahab made no objection, and summoned four hundred prophets, all of whom encouraged him to proceed, and promised him success.†

Jehoshaphat, however, was not quite satisfied, and asked whether there was not a prophet of Jehovah‡ besides; when Ahab mentioned Micaiah, the son of Imlah, but declared that he hated him, as he never prophesied good concerning him, but evil.

Ahab having sent for Micaiah, said, Shall we go against Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for Jehovah shall deliver it into the hand of the king; but we may suppose that this was

* 1 Kings, xxii. 3, 4. 2 Chron. xviii. 2, 3.

† 1 Kings, xxii. 6—11. 2 Chron. xviii. 5—10.

‡ Jehoshaphat must have regarded these prophets as sycophants, whose interest it was to counsel Ahab to please himself. He knew that Israel was favoured with Elijah, Elisha, and other eminent prophets, though none of them appeared at court: he felt dissatisfied; but being too much afraid of giving offence, he seemed to allow that these were prophets of God, yet he wished to consult some other, if there were any to be found. Perhaps he took occasion, from their using the word, Elohim (which might mean either the God of Israel, or a false God), to enquire after some prophet of Jehovah, and this might induce them afterwards to change their language in this respect. Scot in loco.

Thus solemnly called upon, and perhaps no
his divine commission, Micaiah thus addresse
monarch; I saw all Israel scattered upon the
that have not a shepherd: and Jehovah said,
master: let them return every man to his ho

Ahab having remarked to Jehoshaphat, Di
that he would prophesy no good concerning
Micaiah continued his address, Hear thou
word of Jehovah: I saw Jehovah sitting on
all the host of heaven standing by him on his
on his left. And Jehovah said, Who shall
that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead
on this manner, and another said on that man
came forth a spirit, and stood before Jehova
will persuade him. And Jehovah said unto hi
And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a
the mouth of all his prophets. And he said,
suade him, and prevail also: go forth, and
therefore, behold, Jehovah hath put a lying
mouth of all these thy prophets, and Jehov
evil concerning thee.†

Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, one of t
tering prophets, who had made him horns of

sumed them,* now smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, with a true infidel sneer, Which way went the spirit of Jehovah from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.†

In return for this faithful dealing, Ahab commanded his officers to carry Micaiah back unto Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, the king's son, and say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I come in peace. And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, Jehovah hath not spoken by me, and he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you.‡

Notwithstanding this prophetic denunciation, the two monarchs§ proceeded to Ramoth Gilead, but Ahab, as crafty as cowardly, persuaded‖ Jehoshaphat to wear his royal robes, whilst he disguised himself, and thus they went into the battle, and thus too we have a sample of the character of friendship amongst the wicked.¶

* 1 Kings, xxii. 11. 2 Chron. xviii. 10.

† 1 Kings, xxii. 24, 25. 2 Chron. xviii. 23, 24.

‡ 1 Kings, xxii. 26—28. 2 Chron. xviii. 25—27.

§ Jehoshaphat's silent connivance at Ahab's treatment of Micaiah, and his willingness to go with him to battle, after these solemn warnings, were very criminal, and almost unaccountable. Perhaps he feared personal insults, or he persuaded himself that in Ahab's court he had no business to intermeddle; or, matters were carried with such violence and precipitation, that he had scarcely time to reflect on his own conduct. Scot in loco.

‖ He made this insidious proposal, under pretence of honouring Jehoshaphat as with the chief command.—Scot in Loco. On the contrary, Burder (O. L. 565.) considers that the royal robes were a means of protection; and that Ahab, by laying them aside, exposed himself to increased personal danger.

¶ 1 Kings, xxii. 29, 30. 2 Chron. xviii. 28, 29.

fore, when they found their mistake, they turned
pursuing him.*

But Ahab was not to escape the judgment of
Micaiah had told him he should never return out o
tle in peace.† The disguise he wore might co
unhappy monarch from man, but not from the o
eye of God; and, therefore, although a Syrian bow
his arrow at a venture, it was directed by the han
niscience, so as to wound Ahab between the join
harness.‡

It does not appear, however, that Benhadad was
obtain a victory, for Ahab was supported in h
throughout the day; and towards the going down
a proclamation went throughout the host, "every
city, and every man to his country."§

Ahab died in the evening, and the blood havi
of the wound, into the midst of the chariot, when
to wash it in the pool of Samaria, the dogs lick
blood.‖

Ahab reigned over Israel twenty-two years;¶ but
none like unto Ahab which did sell himself to wor
ness in the sight of Jehovah, whom Jezebel his w
up. And he did very abominably in following idol

ing to all things as did the Amorites, whom Jehovah cast out before the children of Israel.* In his days did Hiel, the Bethelite, build Jericho; he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram, his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son, Segub, according to the word of Jehovah.†

Thus lived and thus died Ahab, and he was brought to Samaria and buried, and slept with his fathers, and was succeeded by his son,‡

AHAZIAH.

A. C. 897. THIS monarch did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin; for he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger Jehovah, the God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.§

He entered into some kind of commercial treaty with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and united with him in building ships to go to Tarshish; and the ships were built in Ezion-gaber; but they were shipwrecked, and not allowed to accomplish their voyage.‖

Having met with an accident by falling down through a lattice in his upper chamber, that was in Samaria, he became sick and sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether he should recover from his disease. By the express command of God, Elijah intercepted these messengers in their way, and said unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Now, therefore, thus saith Jehovah, Thou

* 1 Kings, xxi. 25, 26. † 1 Kings, xvi. 34. Josh. vi. 26.
‡ 1 Kings, xxii. 31—40. § 1 Kings, xxii. 52, 53.
‖ 2 Chron. xx. 35—37.

shalt not come down from that bed on which th
but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.*

Upon making their report to Ahaziah, he as
manner of man it was had sent him such a
when they described him as a hairy man, a
girdle of leather about his loins, he knew him
Tishbite.†

Highly enraged, the wicked monarch imme
officer with fifty soldiers to apprehend the prop
the top of a hill where he had taken shelter;
had the officer commanded him to come down
the king, than Elijah invoked fire from heave
sumed the whole troop.‡ A second troop se
errand were consumed by a similar miracle.
monarch, by no means impressed with thes
ments, persisted in sending a third troop; the
which aware that his life was in his hands, and
less than to share the fate of those that had
came, and fell on his knees before Elijah, and
Oh man of God, I pray thee, let my life and th
fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight. Beh
fire down from heaven and burnt up the two c
former fifties, with their fifties; therefore, let
precious in thy sight.§

It pleased God now to shew, that he cou
servant, as well in the midst of the court and a
Samaria, as on the top of a solitary mountain
could restrain the bitter vengeance of Ahazial

judgments. He, therefore, ordered Elijah to go down with the third troop, and not to be afraid of Ahaziah; and the prophet, full of faith and confidence in the divine promises, yielded a ready and cheerful obedience. Having, therefore, presented himself before Ahaziah, he delivered his message; Thus saith Jehovah, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word; therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*

And, adds the sacred historian, "so he died,"† having reigned two years over Israel;‡ and was succeeded by his brother,§

JEHORAM.

A. C. 896. It is for our encouragement, as well as for our profit, that the Holy Spirit so frequently notices the slightest indications of good, in the various characters whom he describes; shewing that indeed and in truth the very thoughts of our hearts, are known to our omniscient Creator and Judge; and that we shall indeed be judged according to our works, although we can never be saved but through the free mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus, although Jehoram wrought evil in the sight of Jehovah, yet it was not in the degree that his father and mother, Ahab and Jezebel, had done; for he put away the image of Baal which his father, at the instigation of his mother, had set up. Still, however, he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin, and departed not from them.‖

* 2 Kings, i. 16. † 2 Kings, i. 17.
‡ 1 Kings, xxii. 51. § 2 Kings, i. 17. ‖ 2 Kings, iii. 2, 3.

It was in the early part of this reign that Jehovah thought fit to translate the prophet Elijah, like his servant Enoch into heaven, without subjecting him to the ordinary lot of mortality. Preparatory to this extraordinary event, Elijah went with Elisha to Gilgal, where Elijah wished Elisha to remain, as Jehovah had sent him to Beth-el. But Elisha, either aware of the magnificent display of divine power which was about to follow, or too affectionately attached to his master to leave him, positively refused, emphatically declaring, As Jehovah liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee; so they both went down to Beth-el. Elijah then pressed him to remain at Beth-el, whilst he went to Jericho, but Elisha repeated the same declaration; so they came to Jericho. Once more Elijah tried his pupil's fidelity and perseverance, but in vain; and they went on till they arrived at the river Jordan.

It appears that it was well known to others, as well as to Elisha, that some extraordinary occurrence was about to take place with respect to Elijah; for the sons of the prophets who were at Beth-el and at Jericho, had both warned Elisha that he was about to lose his master.* Fifty of these young men had now followed at a distance, to watch what would take place.†

When Elijah arrived at the margin of the river, he wrapped his mantle together and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that he and Elisha went over on dry ground. When on the other side, Elijah asked Elisha what he should do for him, before he was taken away from him. Elisha said, I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be.

* 2 Kings, ii. 3. 5. † 2 Kings, ii. 7.

And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more; and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.*

Elisha having made some stay at Jericho, the men of the city complained to him, that the water was naught, and the ground barren, upon which Elisha took a new cruse, and having put salt therein, he cast it into the springs; and assured the inhabitants, that from thence there should not be any more dearth, or barren land, and the waters were healed accordingly.†

Passing on to Beth-el, some little children came out of the city, and mocked him, crying, Go up, thou bald head, go up, thou bald head; whereupon Elisha cursed them in the name of Jehovah; and there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tore forty and two children of them.‡ After which

* 2 Kings, ii. 1—15. † 2 Kings, ii. 21, 22.

‡ The Hebrew does not mean *children*, but *worthless, profligate, young men.*—A. Clarke in loco, and Levi's Letters to Paine, p. 199.; by both of whom the prophet is triumphantly exculpated from the infidel charge of cruelty, and the justice of God vindicated.

from the accident he met with, and his ea
no steps to subdue the Moabite.

Jehoram, however, having formed
Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and with t
now proceeded to chastise his rebellion
through the wilderness of Edom, and fe
seven days journey, they found themselve
the host, and for the cattle that followed th
and those who have no communion with,
confidence in God, are usually the first to g
and thus the king of Israel unjustly compl
Jehovah hath called these three kings to
them into the hand of Moab,"‖ but why J
had not sought him, or inquired at his
should undertake this expedition again
Jehoshaphat, however, said, Is there not
Jehovah of whom we may inquire? And up
that Elisha was there, all the three kings w
When they appeared the prophet said to Je
I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophet
to the prophets of thy mother; as Jehovah
fore whom I stand, were it not that I reg
Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, I would

ee, nor see thee. But now bring me a minstrel. And it me to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of hovah came upon him. And he said, Thus saith Jehovah, ake this valley full of ditches. For thus saith Jehovah, Ye all not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley all be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and our cattle, and your beasts. And this is but a light thing n the sight of Jehovah: he will deliver the Moabites also nto your hand. And ye shall smite every fenced city, and very choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones. And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered, that behold there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.*

The Moabites assembled their armies to encounter this coalition, and from some supernatural effect produced by the sun upon the water, it appeared to them as red as blood; which they took for a symptom that the confederate kings had been fighting amongst themselves, and that the allied hosts had slain each other; whence they said, "Now, therefore, Moab to the spoil."†

Presuming upon this supposition, and probably inattentive to order and discipline, the Moabites approached the camp of Israel; when the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and went forward smiting the Moabites even in their country. And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees; only in Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit, the slingers went about it and smote it. And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men

* 2 Kings, iii. 10—20. † 2 Kings, iii. 21—23.

that drew swords, to break through eve
Edom; but they could not. Then he too
should have reigned in his stead, and offe
offering upon the wall.* And there was
against Israel, and they departed from hi
their own land.†

It is during this reign that some of th
performed by Elisha are related; viz. t
widow's oil to enable her to pay her credi
and patriotism of the woman of Shunem re
of a son, and his subsequent restoration to
of the poisoned pottage;‖ the multiplying
order to supply a multitude;¶ the cleans
Naaman, the Syrian commander,** unques
most beautiful and instructive relations to
book or language; and the recovery of the

But the services of Elisha were not confin
of private individuals only; for the king
revived the war against Israel placed a ca
Jehoram, when Elisha sent him word to
the place of the ambush; who thereupon sent

* See a great number of instances of similar
almost all the nations of ancient and modern paga
Burder, O. L. No. 570., and Burder, O. C. No. 4
Wilson, and others, however, suppose that the ki
unsuccessful sortie, had taken the son of the king
and that it was the prince of Idumæa, and not h
the king of Moab sacrificed on the wall.—See A.

d this was repeated several times till the king of Syria gan to suspect the fidelity of his own officers, and asked, ill ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel? ut they truly answered him, None, my lord, O king, but isha, the prophet, that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel e words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.*

Benhadad having ascertained that the prophet was in Do-an, sent an armed force to surround the city, and when his rvant with a fainting heart said, Alas, my master, how all we do; Elisha replied, Fear not, for they that be with s are more than they that be with them; and thereupon raying that the young man's eyes might be opened, he there aw that Elisha was protected by horses and chariots of fire, which filled the mountain by the divine command.†

But this was not all, for God having, at the prayer of Elisha, mote the Syrian host with blindness, the prophet came mongst them and conducted them into the midst of Samaria, nd then their eyes were opened. The king of Israel would ave slain them, but Elisha said, Wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy ow? Set bread and water before them that they may eat nd drink, and go to their master. And he prepared great rovision‡ for them; and when they had eaten and drunk, he

* 2 Kings, vi. 8—12.

† 2 Kings, vi. 13—17. What astonishing intercourse had this man with heaven! It seems the whole heavenly host had it in commission to help him.—A. Clarke. And what, but the want of faith, deprives every believing Christian of equally powerful protection?

‡ When Elisha shewed Jehoram the impropriety of slaughtering prisoners of war, whom he had taken captive, much more that of smiting those whom God had led into that situation, he desisted from his purpose; nay, he obeyed the prophet's orders in entertaining and dismissing the whole army! Yet this very man soon after determined to murder this same prophet! Scot in loco.

of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of do
pieces of silver.

Highly excited by the agonizing represen
who had consented to boil her son to prolo
Jehoram who had so lately§ submitted resp
thority of Elisha, now suddenly swore,‖ G
also to me, if the head of Elisha, the son
stand on him this day.¶

Whilst Elisha sat in his house with the e
arrived from the king; but aware of his mur
he ordered the door to be shut till Jehora
when the prophet thus addressed him. He
Jehovah; thus saith Jehovah, To-morrow

* That is, the land of Israel was no longer in
datory bands of Syria—it does not mean that t
invade again. Scot and A. Clarke in loco.

† 2 Kings, vi. 18—23.

‡ This very evil Moses had foretold should
they forsook God.—Deut. xxviii. 53—57. The s
this wretched people, when besieged by Nebuc
v. 10. And again, when Titus besieged Jerusa
207. and A. Clarke in loco, and on Matt. xxiv. 19.

§ 2 Kings, vi. 23.

‖ Either Elisha had denounced this judgment
his sins, or Jehoram supposed that it was sen

hall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.*

To this merciful intimation, which ought to have filled their hearts with joy and gratitude, an infidel courtier, on whose hand the king leaned, tauntingly remarked, "Behold, if Jehovah would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" And Elisha said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.†

Pursuant to this promise, Jehovah had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host; and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.‡

It would seem that neither Jehoram nor his courtiers, had placed any reliance upon the prophet's declaration, at least they do not appear to have been watching the Syrian army, and were most likely immersed in the sleep of infidelity and despair. In the city, however, there were four lepers, who from their melancholy situation,§ were necessarily suffering, if possible, more severely than the other inhabitants.

These unhappy‖ men, aware of the desperate state of the besieged, and certain that from the diseased and proscribed condition in which they were themselves, they must necessarily be amongst the first victims to the famine and distress which prevailed, consulted together whether they could possibly be worse off if they gave themselves up to the Syrians,

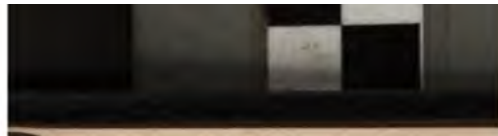
* 2 Kings, vii. 1. † 2 Kings, vii. 2. ‡ 2 Kings, vii. 6, 7.
§ Lev. xiii. 45, 46.

‖ It is supposed that the lepers who gave information of the Syrians' retreat, were Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, and his three sons. Ans. Bayley in 2 Kings, viii. 4.

their own hunger and thirst, and take pos
the treasures which the frightened host had
but they also recollected that it was their
mediate intelligence to their countrymen
they returned to the city and informed the
word to the palace.*

The king having arisen, and it being stil
lecting, most probably, the late plan of the
laying ambushes for him, he fully expected th
object. At the suggestion of one of his
sent two horsemen to reconnoitre, who ha
march of the Syrian host unto the river Jor
reported to their sovereign that all the way w
and vessels, which the Syrians had cast aw
At this intelligence the besieged sallied fort
tents of the Syrians, so that a measure of fi
for a shekel, and two measures of barley for
ing to the word of Jehovah.†

But the glory of God having been vindica
vant justified, it was still proper that the
infidel should be signally punished; and, th
having appointed that infidel lord to the ch
as a post of honour and confidence, the
throng soon overpowered him, and he was



crowd; he saw indeed the plenty with his eyes, but he not thereof.*

Benhadad the king of Syria being confined with sickness, d hearing that Elisha the prophet was arrived at Damascus, nt Hazael his chief officer to him with a present,† to in- uire whether he should recover of his disease. To this quiry Elisha said, "Go say unto him, Thou mayest cer- inly recover:‡ howbeit Jehovah hath shewed me that he all surely die." And he settled his countenance stedfastly, ntil he was ashamed; and the man of God wept.§ Upon azael's inquiry why he wept, the prophet replied, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children f Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their oung men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash heir children, and rip up their women with child." And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should lo this great thing?‖ And Elisha answered, Jehovah hath hewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.¶

On his return, this high minded lord who pretended to be orror struck, at being supposed capable of the crimes and ruelties which Elisha had foretold, first deceived his overeign with a deliberate falsehood, by telling him that the rophet had assured him he should recover; and almost

* 2 Kings, vii. 17—20. vii. 2.

† Sufficient to load forty camels, 2 Kings, viii. 9.

‡ Say thou certainly will not recover, for Jehovah, &c. This is the textual reading, and seems to be preferable to that of the margin, 70, and the Vulgate. A Bayley in loco. "That is, God has not *determined* thy death, nor will it be a *necessary consequence* of the *disease* by which thou art now afflicted: but this wicked man (Hazael) will abuse the power and trust thou hast reposed in him, and will take away thy life. He (Benhadad) might live for all his sickness, but *thou* wilt put an end to his life." A. Clarke.

§ 2 Kings, viii. 10, 11. ‖ See note p. 604.

¶ 2 Kings, viii. 12, 13. 1 Kings, xix. 15.

broke out, between Hazael and Jehoram;
of Benhadad, both nations had been a
possession of Ramoth Gilead; so now Jeh
that city from the Syrian monarch, and
there; in which he had been assisted by
Judah; but having been severely wounde
Jezreel to be healed, leaving, as it would se
of Nimshi, in the command of his army.†

Whilst Jehoram thus lay sick, Elisha sent
prophets with a box of oil to Ramoth, in
Jehu;‡ with directions when he had a
open the door, and flee, and not to tarry.
man, even the young man the prophet,
Gilead. And when he came, behold, the
host were sitting; and he said, I have an
O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which o
said, To thee, O captain. And he arose, a
house; and he poured the oil on his head, an
Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I ha
king over the people of Jehovah, even over I
shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, t
the blood of my servants the prophets, and th

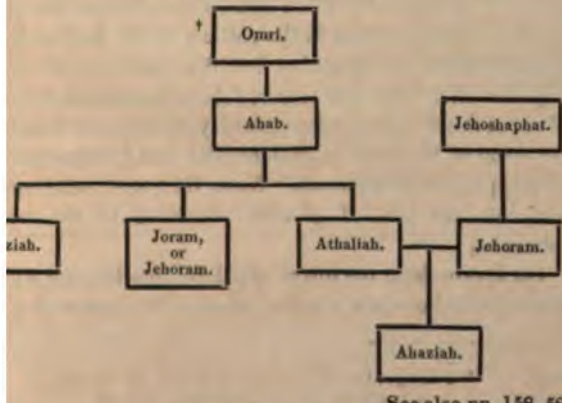
* 2 Kings viii. 14, 15.

ts of Jehovah, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole
of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from Ahab
male, and him that is shut up and left in Israel; and
make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam,
n of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha, the son of
h; and the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of
l, and there shall be none to bury her. And having
red his message, he opened the door and fled, as he had
commanded by Elisha.*

as anointed, Jehu conspired against his sovereign, and
g been proclaimed king by the troops, and laid an in-
on of secrecy upon them, he proceeded instantly in a
t to Jezreel, where Jehoram then lay with his nephew
iah,† king of Judah, who had gone to visit him in his
ded state.‡

soon as the watchman descried the approach of Jehu,
the watch tower of Jezreel, Jehoram sent messengers

* 2 Kings, ix. 1—10.

† 

See also pp. 158. 580.

‡ 2 Kings, ix. 11—16.

that monarch, together with Ahaziah,
respective chariots against Jehu; and it
the providence of God, that they should
portion of Naboth, the Jezreelite, in tha
Ahab the father of Jehoram, or rather his
so wickedly obtained from the conscien
subornation of perjury and murder.‡

As soon as Jehoram saw Jehu, he anx
peace, Jehu? Upon which the latter replie
long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezeb
crafts are so many? Jehoram exclaiming
there was treachery, turned his chariot an
drew a bow with his full strength, and smote
his arms, and the arrow went out at his h
down in his chariot. Then said Jehu to B
Take up, and cast him in the portion of th
the Jezreelite: for remember how that, whe
together after Ahab his father, Jehovah pr
phecy:§ Surely I have seen yesterday the blo
the blood of his sons, saith Jehovah; and I
in this plat, saith Jehovah. Now, therefo
him into the plat of ground, according
Jehovah.‖

On approaching the tower or palace, Jeze
Ahab, looked out at a window, when at the c

e eunuchs threw her down, and her blood was sprinkled
he wall, and on the houses; and he trod her under foot.
ollecting afterwards, that this cursed woman was the
ghter of a king, he sent out orders to have her burned;
they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet,
the palm of her hands, whereby was fulfilled the prophecy
Elijah, that in the portion of Jezreel dogs should eat the
of Jezebel; and that the carcass of Jezebel should be as
g upon the face of the field, in the portion of Jezreel, so
they should not say, This is Jezebel.*

JEHU.

As Ahab had still seventy sons surviving, it was necessary for Jehu to act with policy; and, therefore, he sent to the rulers of Samaria, and the elders, and ested to them to place the most promising of the princes is father's throne. Intimidated, however, with what had rred, and most probably suspecting that Jehu was only ing to discover who were his enemies, they immediately ed unconditional submission to the usurper; and, by his mand, even the confidential tutors and guardians of these ppy youths, hesitated not to imbrue their hands in the d of their late master's children; for having beheaded

* Kings, ix. 30—37. 1 Kings, xxi. 23. "There was not even a *ry stone* to say here lies Jezebel! Not even a *mound of earth* signate the place of her sepulture! Judgment is God's strange ; but when he contends, how terrible are his judgments! and he aimeth to execute judgment, who shall stay his hand? deep are his counsels, and how terrible are his workings."—ARKE.

him; but who slew all these? Know
fall unto the earth nothing of the wo
he spake concerning the house of Ah
done that which he spake by his serv
slew all that remained of the house
and all his great men, and his kinsfolks,
he left him none remaining.† And th
declaration of Elijah; Him that escapeth
shall Jehu slay; and him that escapet
shall Elisha slay."‡

Having met with Jehonadab, the son
coming to meet him, he saluted him, a
thine heart right, as my heart is with th
nadab answered, It is. If it be, give m
he gave him his hand; and he took him
chariot. And he said, Come with me, a
Jehovah. So they made him ride in his
he came to Samaria, he slew all that rem
Samaria, till he had destroyed him, acco
of Jehovah, which he spake to Elijah.§

But Jehu's commission was not yet
under the pretext of offering a great sa
lected all the idolatrous priests and w

rd, and burnt the image of Baal, and broke down the se, and made it a draught house.*

Zealous, however, as Jehu appeared, he departed not from sins of Jeroboam; to wit, the golden calves that were in th-el and that were in Dan. And Jehovah said unto Jehu, cause thou hast done well in executing that which is right mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth neration shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took heed to walk in the law of Jehovah, the God of Israel, with l his heart; for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, hich made Israel to sin.†

It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that Jehovah began cut Israel short; for Hazael smote them in all the coasts of srael, from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.‡

After reigning twenty-eight years over Israel, he died a natural death, and slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria; and was succeeded by his son,

JEHOAHAZ.

A. C. 856. THIS monarch also did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and followed the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin.§ And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael, king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad, the son of Hazael, all their days. And Jehoahaz besought Jehovah, and Jehovah hearkened

* 2 Kings, x. 18—28. † 2 Kings, x. 29—31.
‡ 2 Kings, x. 32, 33. § 2 Kings, xiii. 1, 2.

beforetime. Nevertheless, they departed no
the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel t
therein; and there remained the grove also i
ther did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz
men, and ten chariots, and ten thousand
king of Syria had destroyed them, and had
the dust by threshing.*

* 2 Kings, xiii. 3—7. Few passages of Scri
instructive lessons than the career of Hazael.
streaming eyes foretold the misery, ruin, and cru
would inflict upon the prophet's countrymen, da
of their children, and rip up the women with chil
indignant, and inquired, Is thy servant a dog, that
Do you imagine that I am the very outcast of soc
of perpetrating such unheard of wickedness? 2
And yet this he did and more—he went home and
nated his unsuspecting sovereign, Benhadad, by on
cious methods of committing murder (2 Kings, vi
he oppressed Israel, he made them like the d
2 Kings, xiii. 7. And thus is exemplified the in
every human heart. Hazael startled at being thou
his king—of children—and women with child!—b
was in *his* heart and is in *every* human heart, and c
called forth by the appropriate incitement or proc
satan took care to apply at the proper moment, an

ehoahaz reigned over Israel seventeen years, when he
t with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria; and was
ceeded by his son,

JOASH.

C. THIS monarch found the kingdom in a very de-
. pressed state, on account of the conquests and seve-
rities of Hazael, king of Syria; but still Jehovah was
cious unto Israel, and had compassion on them, and had
pect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham,
ac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them; neither cast
them from his presence as yet. So Hazael, king of Syria,
d; and Benhadad, his son, reigned in his stead. And
oash, the son of Jehoahaz, took again out of the hand of
nhadad, the son of Hazael, the cities which he had taken
of the hand of Jehoahaz, his father, by war. Three

he painful histories and secret anxieties of private families were
e public; in respect of matters of which the laws do not take
nizance, but which break the hearts, and consign to the grave
y a faithful and affectionate wife, and many a tender-hearted
tive and friend. See another example of the same sort, p. 593,
s.

dam Clarke thinks the above view, which is the usual and most
monly received construction of this passage, quite erroneous;
that so far from Hazael being struck with horror at the contem-
tion of such atrocities being perpetrated by himself, he was
ghted at the prospect, and that his exclamation implied *doubt* and
lest so inconsiderable a person, should not be capable of per-
ning such mighty actions. His argument is chiefly founded on
expression "*great thing*," which the Doctor thinks Hazael would
have made use of, if he had regarded the proceedings which
ha foretold with horror. Note on 2 Kings, viii. 13.

On their return home, the Ephraimit
kindled against Judah, fell upon their
even unto Beth-horon, and smote three
took much spoil.§

Out of this circumstance it is probabl
between these sister states; for Amazi
sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the
Israel, saying, Come, let us see one
And Joash, king of Israel, sent to Ama
saying, The thistle that was in Leban
that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy
to wife; and there passed by a wild be
non, and trode down the thistle. Thou
smitten the Edomites; and thine hea
boast: abide now at home; why shoul
thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, ev
with thee?‖

Amaziah, however, would not listen
the two monarchs with their armies enc

* It was to this monarch no doubt that the
Kings parenthetically and, as it were, proph
Jehovah gave Israel a saviour, &c. See p. 6

† 2 Kings, xiii. 22—25.

h-shemesh, in Judah; when Judah was put to flight, very man fled to his tent. And Joash, the king of took Amaziah, king of Judah, the son of Joash, the Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jeru- ; and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, from the gate raim to the corner gate, four hundred cubits. And he ll the gold and the silver, and all the vessels that were in the house of God with Obededom,* and the treasures king's house, the hostages also, and returned to ia.†

ha, the prophet, having fallen sick, Joash, the king of came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horse- hereof. And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and . And he took unto him bow and arrows. And he the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow, e put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon ng's hands. And he said, Open the window eastward. e opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot, and he shot. e said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the s in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he Take the arrows, and he took them. And he said he king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth im, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst con- it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice. Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of

ed-edom and his descendants were entrusted with the keeping house of *Asuppim*, or *collections* for the divine treasury. 1 xxvi. 15.

† 2 Chron. xxv. 20—24. 2 Kings, xiv. 11—14.



and touched the bones of Elisha, he revi
his feet.*

Joash, however, did that which was
Jehovah; he departed not from all the si
son of Nebat, who made Israel to si
therein,† and having reigned over Israe
years, he slept with his fathers, and wa
with the kings of Israel;‡ and was succe

JEROBOAM II.

A. C. 825. This monarch restored the coas
entering of Hamath unto the sea of
to the word of Jehovah, the God
spake by the hand of his servant Jonah,§
the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher; f
affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter;
any shut up, nor any left, nor any helpe
Jehovah said not that he would blot out

* 2 Kings, xiii. 14—21.

† 2 Kings, xiii. 11.

‡ 2 Kings, xiii. 10—13. xiv. 15, 16. This
lowing chapters, must most likely be owing t

ı under heaven; but he saved them by the hand of Jero-
m, the son of Joash.* He also recovered† Damascus
Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel; but the
ticular circumstances relating to those transactions are
recorded.

Jeroboam, however, though an instrument to save Israel
m utter destruction, till her times were completely fulfilled,
l evil in the sight of Jehovah, and departed not from all
sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to
; and after a long reign of forty-one years, for so long was
day of grace extended through the forbearing mercy of
d, he slept with his fathers, the kings of Israel; and was
ceeded by his son,‡

ZACHARIAH.

C. 4. THE reign of this prince was very short; for at the end of six months, he was assassinated by Shallum, the son of Jabesh, who conspired against him, and ote him before the people, and slew him, and usurped the one;§ and thus was fulfilled the premonitory threat of zebel to Jehu, Had Zimri peace who slew his master?‖

But though the reign was short, it was sinful; for Zachariah o did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, as his

* 2 Kings, xiv. 25—27.

† 2 Kings, xiv. 28. The various enemies of Israel had encroached their borders, from the northern to the southern extremity of the antry belonging to the ten tribes; from Lebanon to the Dead or lt Sea, which had been the plain of Sodom; but Jeroboam, en-ıraged by the predictions of Jonah, drove back those enemies, d recovered the country. Scot in loco.

‡ 2 Kings, xiv. 23, 24, 29.

§ 2 Kings, xiv. 9, 10.

‖ 2 Kings, ix. 31. 1 Kings, xvi. 16—18.

promise and the declaration of God to Jehu
sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth g
thus too was fulfilled the declaration of th
For yet a little while, and I will avenge the
upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to c
of the house of Israel.‡

SHALLUM.

A. C. 772. THIS usurper had reigned only
Menahem, the son of Gadi, came u
Samaria, and slew him, and reigned

MENAHEM.

A. C. 772. THIS monarch smote Tiphsah, a
therein, and the coasts thereof from
they opened not to him, therefore h
the women therein that were with child he

d; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, t his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even ll the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of er, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria ned back, and stayed not there in the land.*

During the ten years he reigned in Samaria, he did t which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and departed not his days from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, o made Israel to sin.† Menahem slept with his fathers; d was succeeded by his son,‡

PEKAHIAH.

C. 1. THIS monarch reigned only two years, during which, like his father, he did evil in the sight of Jehovah: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of bat, who made Israel to sin. After which, Pekah, the son Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and ote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, th Argob and Arich, and with him fifty men of the Gilead-s; and he killed him, and reigned in his room.§

PEKAH.

. C. 51. THIS usurper having formed an unnatural alliance with Rezin, king of Syria, they marched against

those times, the father's name, *Pul*, was added, making *Sardan-l;* and this *Pul* is supposed to be the same that reigned in *Nineveh* hen *Jonah* preached the terrors of the Lord to that city.

* 2 Kings, xv. 19, 20. † 2 Kings, xv. 17, 18.
‡ 2 Kings, xv. 22. § 2 Kings, xv. 23—25.

Judah,* and came up to Jerusalem to war,
Ahaz, but could not overcome him.† For
Isaiah to Ahaz, and by a most remarkable pro
raged him to resist and, finally, to defeat th
that time; and which was most probably to cu
house of David.§

The next year, however, the two monarchs
attack, and made a great slaughter in Judah
away captive of their brethren two hundred tho
sons, and daughters, who were, however, lib
affecting appeal of the prophet Oded.‖

Ahaz having applied for assistance to Tigl
the king of Assyria, that monarch invaded th
Pekah, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah
and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galile
of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyri

Pekah reigned twenty years, during which h
which was evil in the sight of Jehovah: he
from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, wh

HOSHEA.

SHALMANESER,* king of Assyria, having invaded Israel, Hoshea became tributary to him, and gave him presents.† When Hezekiah, king of Judah, circulated nest and fervent appeal to the inhabitants of Israel, as to those of his own dominions, to return to the worship ovah,‡ many of the former went up to Jerusalem, and not appear that any impediment was offered to their o;§ which forbearance may account for the remark of the writer, that although Hoshea did that which was evil in ht of Jehovah, it was not as the kings of Israel that were him.‖ On their return home the Israelites brake the in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the laces, and the altars in Ephraim and Manasseh, until ad utterly destroyed them all.¶

hea having imprudently omitted to pay his tribute to neser, and entered into an alliance with So,** king of the Assyrian monarch marched against him, and him prisoner, besieged Samaria, and took it†† after ears, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed

Enemessar, Tobit, i. 2. Or Shalmon, Hosea, x. 14. He was of Tiglath Pileser. Isaiah calls him the "rod of God's " (ch. x. 5.)

† 2 Kings, xvii. 3. ‡ See p. 185.

§ 2 Chron. xxx. 1. 5, 6. 11. ‖ 2 Kings, xvii. 2.

Chron. xxxi. 1. That is, such of the remnants of idolatry as en left by Tiglath Pileser, or Shalmaneser, for the former en away the golden calf which Jeroboam had set up in Dan, latter that in Beth-el. Seder Olam Rabba. Prid. i. 36.

Kings, xvii. 4. Or Sabacon, the Ethiopian, who having Egypt, and killed Boccaris, the king of that country, he over the same in his stead by the name of So. Prid. i. 40.

†† Hos. x. 4. 8. Micah, i. 6.

tacy of the Israelites, by a declaration of t
misfortunes, as though to justify the wa
every mouth be stopped before his awful
solemn warning to all the nations and r
"Because they obeyed not the voice of J
but transgressed his covenant, and all that
of Jehovah, commanded, and would not
them."†

Whatever remnant of the Israelites had
maneser, were about fifteen years afterw
by Esarhaddon,‡ his grandson, who pla
Israel with colonies from his own dominion
Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim

* 2 Kings, xvii. 4—6. xviii. 9—11. "This
ten tribes was A. M. 3993, the year before th
being two hundred and fifty-four years after th
of that kingdom in Rehoboam's time, which wa
of the strangest things that have been in any his
lar, that there is no plainer account what became
they were carried away into Media."—Dr. W
p. 621.

† 2 Kings, xviii. 12. and much more at length,

See p. 266.

children of Israel. And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not Jehovah; therefore Jehovah sent lions among them, which slew some of them. Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land; therefore he hath sent lions among them, and behold they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land. Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence, and let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land. Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear Jehovah. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.* So they feared Jehovah, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrifice for them in the house of the high places. They feared Jehovah, and served their own gods after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. Unto this day they do after the former manners; they fear not Jehovah, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment

Halle, 1720, calls them merely *presides*, or lieutenants. And that there were such or similar officers under the command of Tatnai, seems very probable, from Ezra, vi. 6. See p. 313.

* See A. Clarke on the names of these idols, at the end of 2 Kings, xvii.

which Jehovah commanded the children
named Israel.* So these nations feared
their graven images, both their children,
children; as did their fathers, so do they

THE SAMARITA

SANBALLAT, the Horonite, who, in
other, had exercised the chief authori
several years, married one of his daugh
a son of Jehoida, the high priest, at Jer
Nehemiah‡ attempted to dissolve all the
which had taken place in Judah, Manasse
and settled there, under the protection of

Darius Nothus, or Ochus, who had succe
of Persia, having engaged in a war with
who had raised an insurrection in the
marched into Phœnicia; when Sanballat ob
from that monarch, to build a temple on
imitation of that at Jerusalem, and mad
priest of it; from which period Samaria be
resort of all the refuse inhabitants of Judal
of time, they became more strict and correct
of the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic
the Jews, except in respect of the heterod

the Jews, exists against the very name of a Samaritan, or uthean to this day.*

Dr. Prideaux supposes that Sanballat died shortly after is at the siege of Gaza.†

When Alexander the Great was besieging the island of yre, he sent both to the Jews and Samaritans for provisions nd other assistance. The former pleaded their oath of fealty Darius Codomanus, king of Persia, but the latter not only mplied with his demands, but sent him eight thousand men assist in the siege.

After he had taken Tyre, and was proceeding to Jerusalem punish the Jews for their refusal, he was diverted from his anguinary purpose by the extraordinary transaction we have lready related,‡ upon which, the Samaritans finding what avours the Macedonian had granted to the Jews, anticipated hat he would confer similar benefits upon them. Having eclined an invitation to visit their city, they applied to e relieved from tribute on the sabbatical years, alleging hat they also were Hebrews, and observed the same law in hat respect as the Jews; but Alexander not comprehending ow this could be, deferred giving any decision till his return rom Egypt, whither he was then marching.§

In revenge, most probably, for this neglect, whilst Alexander as pursuing his conquests in Africa, the Samaritans mutinied gainst Andromachus, one of his favourites whom he had ppointed governor of Syria and Palestine; and on his coming Samaria slew him in a tumult, by setting fire to the house here he was, and burning him to death. On his return from gypt, the Macedonian caused all who had been concerned in ie murder, to be executed, and expelling all the inhabitants, ettled a colony of Macedonians in that city, giving their

* Prid. i. 489—502. † Prid. i. 489.
‡ Judah, p. 353. § Prid. 572, 573. Jos. ii. 123.

followed his army, Alexander sent them i
in Egypt.*

A great number of them, however, as w
settled at Alexandria, under the encourag
them successively by Alexander, and Ptol
in those dominions.†

After the death of Antigonus, his son D
for some time possession of Tyre and Sidon
lieutenants, made an inroad upon the Sama
the country.‡

When Antiochus the Great had subdue
neighbouring country, during his war wit
pater, he placed Hippolochus and Keræas
of Samaria with five thousand men, to secu

When Antiochus Epiphanes had subdue
meter, on his return to Antioch he made An
of Samaria.||

After Antiochus had returned to Antio
expedition into Egypt, he issued a decree
of religion throughout the provinces subjec
which was chiefly levelled against the J
occasion the Samaritans gave a signal inst
duplicity. Whenever the Jews were in prosp
kindred to them, as descended from the

waited the Jews, they presented a petition to Antiochus, alleging they were of Sidonian origin,* and praying that their temple on mount Gerizim might be consecrated to the Grecian Jupiter.† Antiochus having acceded to their wishes, ordered Nicanor, his deputy governor, to consecrate their temple accordingly, and exempted them from the penalties inflicted on the Jews.‡

In the reign of Ptolemy Philometer, some of the Samaritans, who had found their way amongst the Jews who had established themselves at Alexandria, like Dr. Cox and his companions at Frankfort and Strasbourg,§ could not let the peaceable Jews worship their God in quiet, even at that distance from their native land, but excited a commotion there as to the right place for the worship of the God of Israel. And absurd and unimportant as the question would seem, and must have appeared in the eyes of the Egyptian monarch, the question was solemnly agitated before him and his council by professed advocates on either side; but the Samaritans, failing in their proofs, were convicted of sedition and their advocates put to death.‖

Soon after the death of Antiochus Sidetes, king of Syria, John Hyrcanus, son of Simon Maccabæus, then high priest

* Whenever it suited their purpose they pretended they were descended from the same stock as the Jews, as when Alexander the Great granted immunities to the Jews.—Jos. vol. ii. p. 133. But whenever the Jews were in difficulties they were amongst the first to separate themselves from them, and assist to oppress them. In this petition they blasphemously allege that their worship of a God without a name, was only in compliance with an ancient superstition of the Jews. Prid. ii. 216.

† Prid. ii. 215. ‡ Prid. ii. 216.

§ Which transaction may be considered as the cause and origin of dissent from the Church of England.

‖ Prid. ii. 319. Basn. 71.

Cyzicenus came to their relief, but w
brothers; as were his generals and son
sent to their aid by Apion or Lathy
after which the city fell into their h
demolished the place, razed the hous
caused trenches to be drawn across it
them with water, so that it might not
this state it remained till Gabinius, the
the Great, was made president of Syria
one part of his army through the country
was besieging Alexandrium, he rebuil
with Azotas, Gaza, Raphia, Anthedon,
Apollonia, Dora, Marissa, and several o
been demolished during the wars of the

Whilst Gabinius was absent in the c
the restoration of Ptolemy Auletes, Alex
of Aristobulus, assembled a large arm
many of the Romans, drove the rest to
he besieged them; but upon the return
a battle took place, in which Alexander
loss of ten thousand men.‖

Gabinius had ordered the rebuilding
was for some time called the city of th

considerable advances till the time of Herod the
; who having by his atrocities and innovations
e hatred and detestation of the Jews, thought it
to provide for his own security, by preparing other
trength besides Jerusalem. He, therefore, rebuilt
f Samaria in great splendour, and called it Sebaste,
of Augustus, and planted it with six thousand
vited thither from all parts, dividing among them
ry about it; which being of a very fertile soil, as
was cultivated, it brought forth such plenty, as in a
e rendered the place rich and populous, and made
swer all the purposes for which he intended it.*
al and schismatic as these people were, yet it
od that their ancient connexion with the house of
uld be so far recognized, as that the offer of grace,
ledge of salvation, should not be entirely with-
m them; and thus it will be seen at the great day,
y mouth may be stopped, and all the world may
ilty before God.†
s that offer to be made to them as the elder sister‡
se of Judah, by any one of less distinction than
ur himself;§ and we have reason to suppose the
nvitation was not wholly in vain.‖
s it may not be altogether visionary to imagine that
l call of a few¶ of the Samaritans, was an earnest of
e restoration of the ten tribes which is so clearly
*

. ii. 697. † Rom. iii. 19. ‡ Ezek. xvi. 46.
. 5—30. ‖ John, iv. 39—42. ¶ Acts, viii. 14.
work of this kind, it can hardly be expected that the Editor
r, at any extended length, into the much agitated question
tence and return of the ten tribes. Of the main fact he
no rational doubt can be entertained, unless many import-
es in the prophecies are to be treated as unmeaning nulli-

Whilst Pontius Pilate was procurator of Judea, an enthusiast having induced the populace to assemble on mount

ties; but where those tribes are now to be found, and how and in what way they will return, is a question which the fulfilment of the prophecies relating to that people, can alone probably explain. Captain Carver thought he had discovered them amongst the North American Indians—others have assumed that the inhabitants of Peru and Mexico were their descendants. The late Dr. Buchanan considered that the black Jews of Cochin, or the Affghan Tartars, were the representatives of the house of Israel; and more lately Wolff, the Jewish missionary, imagines he has discovered them in the Beni Israel of Yemen.

In reference to the Affghans, Sir Wm. Jones has the following note on a translation, by Mr. H. Vansittart, of the history of the people. "This account of the *Affghans* may lead to a very interesting discovery. We learn from *Esdras*, that the ten tribes, after a wandering journey, came to a country called *Arsaret*, where, we may suppose, they settled. Now the *Affghans* are said, by the best Persian historians, to be descended from the Jews: they have traditions among themselves of such a descent, and it is even asserted that their families are distinguished by the names of *Jewish* tribes; although since their conversion to the *Islám*, they studiously conceal their origin. The *Pushtoo*, of which I have seen a dictionary, has a manifest resemblance to the *Chaldaic*; and a considerable district under their dominion is called Hazarek, or Hazaret, which might easily have been changed into the word used by *Esdras*. I strongly recommend an inquiry into the literature and history of the Affghans." —Vol. i. of the Supplement to Sir Wm. Jones's Works. Dr. Adam Clarke, from whom the editor has extracted the above note, adds "*Every thing considered, I think it by far the most probable, that the Affghans are the descendants of the Jews who were led captive by the Assyrian kings.*"—2 Kings, xvii. 6. And not very inconsistent with the above conclusion, is the long and curious detail given by Ramsay, who seems divided in his opinion, whether the descendants of the ten tribes are to be found in India, Persia, or China.—pp. 468—486.

Much relating to the ten tribes may be found in Bp. Horsley's Notes on Hosea, and in his letter on the 18th chapter of Isaiah (now very scarce). More still in Mr. Faber's View of the Prophecies relating to the Conversion and Return of Judah and Israel. But perhaps the

Gerizim, upon his assurance that he would shew them the sacred vessels which were supposed to be there concealed;

most curious, as well as the most ingenious account relating to the subject, is to be found in the ISRAEL REDUX, London 1677. Wherein are comprised two dissertations, one by Dr. Giles Fletcher, and the other by S. Lee; the latter of which has the following conclusion.—"It is now high time to fix a period to this inquisition, and conclude with a serious reply to such as may demand cui bono? to what purpose is this expense of time and thoughtfulness? It is probable most of this age may not reach this blessed time. If I should say, pungimus posteritate, we plant for succession, they will return, the nearer those days approach, the brighter they will shine." When many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.—(Dan. xii. 4.) But however they deal with students in prophecy, let men forbear to teach the Spirit of God wisdom; as if the infinitely holy and wise God must be instructed in their cockleshells, as one speaks in a treatise by some assigned to Bernard.

Sooner lade the deep ocean, than any of the least of the deep ways of God. He thought it meet to write these things, and who art thou to say to Him, what doest Thou? He thought it wisdom to dictate those excellent mysteries to the Church; He gave the word, and many are they that publish it. He counted it a piece of His love and kindness to His church, to reveal His counsels so long before the expiration of the prophecies, and proclaims and pronounces *those* both wise and blessed that study them; (Rev. i. 3. xiii. 18. xxii. 7.) then by the censure of the divine word, they must be fools and miserable wretches that neglect and contemn these sacred oracles. Of what spirit must they be that reflect upon the counsels and dictates of God? Certainly very nefarious and impious. Such bold and arrogant spirits, with what pride of heart do they arraign his decrees, his foreknowledge, and his holy management of the affairs in heaven and earth? With what irreverence do they dare to dive into the depths of God, who hath made all things for himself, and the wicked for the day of evil.—(Prov. xvi. 4.)

Neither are they less imperious about the Church of Christ, than the state of particular souls, in making sanctions for government in their dictatorial chair: yea, and dare to pronounce an apagè upon the sacred prophecies, as if needless to be studied and searched into, and by consequence needless to be written.

and having arrived at a village called Tirathaba with arms in their hands, Pilate intercepted them with his troops, and

But the Holy Ghost avers, that all scripture is profitable, and whatever things are written, are written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the scripture we might hope.—(2 Tim. iii. 16. Rom. xv. 4.) And in particular the Spirit of God proclaims those blessed and happy who read and meditate on the prophetical writings.

They must stand in judgment before that great master, whose sacred pages they have contradicted, and dare to affront his messages, which have taken hold of their fathers, and in due time shall find them out:—(Zech. i. 6.) Such are they upon whom the vials are to be poured out, that blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.—(Rev. xiii. 6.) But as to the saints, and such as reverence the sacred oracles, these things are a great delight, and of choice use and benefit.

1. Since they are grounded upon the declarative will of God, it is their duty and practice to pray for the issue of the prophecies, which though terrible to their enemies, are yet a promise to the church.

2. To hope for and expect the happy day of the manifestation of the sons of God, (2 Pet. iii. 13. Rom. viii. 21.) when the creature that now groans under the bondage of the wicked, shall be delivered into their glorious liberty.

3. To rejoice in the glory of the church that is coming, and delight in the dust of Zion, mingling it with their tears, to cement her rising walls with triumph.

4. To sustain the present exercises and troubles with faith, patience, and joy, (Rev. xiii. 10. xiv. 12.) assuredly knowing that these days of sin and sorrow hasten to a period. The ancient patriarchal church saw not our Lord's incarnation, which their children enjoyed. Our forefathers saw not the revelation and consuming stroke of antichrist, which we have beheld; (2 Thess. ii. 8.) and the generation draws nigh, nay, some it may be are already born, who may see a great part of his confusion, if not his final and total ruin. There are four great works upon the wheel of providence, as yet to roll over the world. The destruction of antichrist, the conversion of Israel, the ruin of the Turk, and the glorious state of the church, (Mal. i. 11.) "from the rising of the sun to his going down, when the name of Jehovah of Hosts shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place gospel incense of prayer, and the pure offering of daily wor-

ew great numbers of them. But complaint being made to e Roman governor, Vitellius, Pilate was censured and sent Rome, to answer for his conduct.*

Whilst Ventidius Cumanus was intendant of Judea, the amaritans shewed their relentless hatred against the Jews, or those of Galilee passing through Samaria according to eir custom, in order to worship at Jerusalem, were attacked nd ill treated by the Samaritans; and Cumanus having llowed himself to be bribed by them, and refusing to render ustice to the Galileans, caused a general revolt, in which he Jews were severely punished; but three of the Samaritans who were sent to Rome were condemned to death, and Cumanus banished.†

Previous to the taking of Jotopata by Vespasian, the Samaritans having assembled in multitudes on mount Gerizim, wore the appearance of hostile intentions; and refusing to disperse at the command of Cerialis, the Roman general whom Vespasian sent against them, he attacked them on the mountain, and slew between eleven and twelve thousand of them.‡

The Samaritans partook more or less of the fortunes of the Jews, during the reigns of the subsequent emperors of Rome, and breaking out upon many occasions into revolt, were from time to time destroyed in great numbers. Adrian is

ship shall be presented to his name, for his name shall be great among the heathen, saith Jehovah of Hosts."—(Heb. xi. 13.) Being then persuaded of the promises, though we have not received them in full fruition, let us embrace them in our bosoms, (1 Thess. iv.) and help on those blessed days by fervent prayer, and comfort one another with these and like words of the happy estate of the Church here for a season, and of her glorious estate in heaven for ever.

* Jos. iii. 65, 66. Crevier, iii. 22. Basn. 73.

† Crevier, iii. 296. Basn. 73. Crevier, iii. 294. 296.

‡ Crevier, vi. 153. Basn. 73.

said to have taken away all their books and prohibited them the rite of circumcision; whilst Theodosius was more favourable to them.

In the reign of Theodoric they were so numerous at Rome, as to be able to contest with that church the right to a building, which they claimed as one of their ancient synagogues.

In the reign of Zeno they rebelled and elected a king of the name of Julian, but who was defeated by the generals of Justinian, and thereupon all their synagogues were demolished. And it is said that no less than twenty thousand of them were slain by the sword, and twenty thousand more sold by the Arabs to the infidels of Persia and India.*

By degrees, however, these people sunk into insignificance, and perhaps it would be difficult to be sure that one of their genuine descendants is now in existence. The famous Benjamin of Tudela could find but about one hundred of them even in the twelfth century, who were very poor and wretched, at Sichem; but who still continued to offer there such sacrifices as their poverty would allow.

Baldensel found some of them in the fourteenth century, who carefully distinguished themselves from the Jews as well as the Mahometans, and Christians; and who Basnage thinks were genuine descendants of the Samaritans.

Basnage alleges there were in his time† some Samaritans still left at Sichem or Naplous,‡ situate between mount Ebal

* Gibb. viii. 324. † 1708.

‡ Maundrell visited this place in 1697, and had a very curious conversation with a Samaritan high priest then residing there, respecting many questions arising out of the Old Testament.—See his Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, pp. 79. 85.; and for the present state of Naplous see Jolliffe's Letters from Palestine, p. 44. Wilson's Travels, vol. i. 976. and Gray's Key to the Old Testament, pp. 17 and 18. The learned Joseph Scaliger also entered into a correspondence with these people, from which it appears that at that time

t Gerizim, who observed the law of Moses more
an the Jews; and that they had there the tomb of
nd his bones which were brought from Egypt;*

ell as the Jews, were looking for a Messiah, who they
eab, or Hathab.—Bp. Chandler's Vindication of his De-
ii. 398. 408. where see many other particulars relating to
tans.

ɔse, the ancient Sychar or Sichem, is luxuriantly embo-
ie most delightful and fragrant bowers, half concealed by
is, and by stately trees collected into groves all around
ul valley in which it stands." Clarke's Travels, vol. ii.
e remark may be interesting to the Christian reader, that
rnaum, the capital of Galilee, which was exalted unto
the highest prosperity, when Jesus and his apostles
here in vain, is brought down to hell, Hades, to death, or
ruction, being nothing now but shapeless ruins, as Cho-
Bethsaida also are; and while Samaria, the capital of the
ich bore its name, is cast down into the valley; Sychar,
f its inferior cities, from which the inhabitants came forth
sus, and in which many believed in him as the Saviour
heard his word, is ranked by every traveller who describes
t the most striking exceptions to the general desolation,
otherwise left but a remembrance of the *cities* of Judah,
, and Galilee."—Keith from Prophecy, p. 153. Nor was
estruction of Samaria without distinct and appropriate pro-
" I will make Samaria as a heap of the field, and as plant-
ineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the
d I will discover the foundations thereof."—Micah, i. 6.
ith Jehovah, As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of
o legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel
out that dwell in Samaria, *in the corner of a bed*, and in
in a couch;—and I will smite the winter house, with the
use, and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great
all have an end, saith Jehovah."—Amos, iii. 12—15.
lly have these predictions been fulfilled, even to the very
ng poured into the valley!—Maundrell, p. 78. Bucking-
vels in Palestine, vol. ii. 391—420. Keith, 155.
. 25. Exod. xiii. 19. Dr. Edward Clarke, in his Travels
ventures a pretty strong opinion that the sarcophagus,

together with some priests of the posterity of Aaron, whom is appointed high priest; and that they offer sacrifices upon mount Gerizim, according to the Levitical rites, and observe the passover, and all the other festivals. The author mentions that in the year 1688, the year of our revolution (now for ever tarnished and obscured), they wrote letters to some of their brethren in England, to inform them of the death of their high priest, and that the learned Ludolph kept up a regular correspondence with them.*

found in the aperture of the great pyramid, was the actual stone coffin in which the bones of Joseph were deposited (Gen. l. 26) and from whence they were removed by Moses when he conducted the Israelites out of Egypt. (Exod. xiii. 19.) And it certainly is a little singular, that the soros was seen without any body in the aperture in the same state, by the earliest historians, viz. the elder Pliny, Herodotus, and others.

* Basn. 77—100. Dr. Huntington's Epistles, by Smith, 1704. These letters which contain a correspondence between Dr. Huntington who was some time provost of Trinity College, Dublin, and afterwards, although for a few days only, Bp. of [illegible] and the learned Job Ludolph of Frankfort, are very curious [illegible] worth a careful perusal; as well with [illegible]

they were likely to prove the original character of the
nguage, and to have been actually engraved by the
luring their abode in the wilderness.

lerness of Paran is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures.
(vol. i. 272.) says that the wilderness of Paran, is taken to
e particularly, that part of Stony Arabia which lies between
i and Hazeroth to the west, and mount Seir to the east;
ere is a city in those parts, near the Red Sea, called Pha-
probably gave name to the adjacent wilderness of Paran,

Chevalier Lapie's splendid map of the Ottoman empire,
at Paris in 1828, we find a place laid down as WADI
nate between mount Sinai and the Red Sea; and those who
nted with the Hebrew are aware, how slight the difference
P and Ph in that language.

In running his eye over the preceding pages, since they
ed, the Editor has discovered a few typographical errors,
ippodrone for Hippodrome, p. 361,—&c. &c. and perhaps
t criticism in p. 77.

FINIS.

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